RETIRED PLEASURES,

IN

PROSE AND VERSE.

BY *GEORGE WRIGHT*, ESQ.

Price Two and Sixpence.

[ENTERED AT STATIONERS'-HALL.]

FRONTISPIECE.

G.W. inv.

O far from Cities my abode remove,
To realms of peace, of innocence & love.

M. Bourne

London, Published by C. Stalker 1787.

RETIRED PLEASURES,

IN

PROSE AND VERSE,

ADDRESSED TO THE

LOVERS OF A COUNTRY LIFE;

WITH OCCASIONAL

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

By *GEORGE WRIGHT*, Esq.

AUTHOR OF THE RURAL CHRISTIAN, &c. &c.

. . . . . me gelidum nemus
Secernit populo. . . . . HORACE.

Here Luſt no object for his fires can gain,
And Pride wants gazers to admire her train.
MOSES BROWN.

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M,DCC,LXXXVII.

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

ADVERTISEMENT.

AS many gentlemen who live in the country may wiſh to know how to improve the calmneſs and tranquility of rural ſcenes, to the beſt advantage; while others who have been ſucceſsful in buſineſs, or are by different methods become the heirs of riches and the ſons of fortune, may be deſirous of retiring from the fatigue and cares of trade and merchandize into the peaceful abodes of *ſylvan* life, * to enjoy mental ſerenity and undiſturbed reflection; † the following treatiſe (chiefly extracted from approved writers) is intended to aſſiſt ſuch perſons, in filling up their time, engaging their thoughts, and exciting their attention, to ſubjects of the greateſt moment and importance, and directing their views to objects heavenly and divine.

G. W.

John-Street, July 1, 1787.

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* A mariner who has been a long voyage, and weathered out many a ſtorm, is happy to ſee his native land, and regain his deſired port; ſo a perſon, after the fatigues and labour of carrying on an extenſive buſineſs for many years, may naturally wiſh to retire from the purſuit of riches, to enjoy them at leiſure in a quiet rural retreat.

† HUNTING, SHOOTING, ANGLING, and the like rural amuſements, are not particularly inſiſted on in this treatiſe, as it is principally intended, to point out and enforce the beſt methods for improving the MIND in the knowledge and practice of virtue and rational devotion; leaving the recreations of the body to every perſon's own choice, only hinting the propriety of regulating our amuſements, whether in town or country, according to the dictates of Humanity, Prudence, Sobriety, and right Reaſon.

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RETIRED PLEASURES.

IN

PROSE AND VERSE.

. . . . . The fall of Kings,
The rage of nations, and the cruſh of ſtates,
Move not the man, who, from the world eſcap'd,
In ſtill retreats and flowery ſolitudes,
To Nature's voice attends. . . . . .

THOMSON'S SEASONS.

OF all the different pleaſures this world affords to its rational inhabitants, through the ſeveral ſtages of human life, there are none more deſirable to the *contemplative* man, than the retired pleaſures of ſylvan ſcenes; (*a*) amidſt the gaiety and diverſions of the beau monde, the amuſements in vogue, and the follies of the times, the ſons and daughters of mortality would be entirely regardleſs of their approaching diſſolution (as certain as it is unavoidable) were it not for the attacks of diſeaſe, the

(*a*) . . . . . Wiſdom has been ſmit
With ſweet receſs, and languiſh'd for the ſhade.

NIGHT THOUGHTS.

warnings of conſcience, and the interpoſitions of divine grace; but Heaven ſees fit at times to ſtop the thoughtleſs and unconcerned, the profligate and abandoned candidates for ſenſual gratifications in their mad career, as Belſhazzar was of old, (*b*) and by alarming providences bring them to reflection.

Happy, thrice happy they, who follow not the giddy multitude, but aſſociate with the ſober and diſcerning *Few*; who, fond of retirement and meditation, ſeek the peaceful retreats of rural life, and far from the noiſy throng, enjoy frequent opportunities of contemplating without diſturbance, the works of nature, according to the obſervation of a late poet,

> Slaves to no ſect, who take no private road,
> But look thro' nature up to nature's God. (*c*)

Man was created for nobler purpoſes than to be a ſlave to vice, a dupe to paſſion, or immerſt in ſenſuality; he is endowed with reaſon and furniſhed with ſufficient power and capacity to know the good and refuſe the evil; he is qualified for the moſt exalted exerciſes of contemplation, prayer and praiſe, in which ſoul-animating duties and employments, he may anticipate the endleſs felicity of the ſaints above; for this grand, important and intereſting deſign, let him frequently retire from company and ſecular avocations, to worſhip in ſpirit and in truth that God, in whom alone he lives, moves

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(*b*) Daniel 5: 6.

(*c*) Pope's Eſſay on Man.

moves and has his being; (*d*) and if he is diſengaged from the cares, hurry and fatigues of trade, let him in the calm receſſes of a country village, inveſtigate truth, detect error, ſtudy the Bible, commune with his Maker, and prepare for death. (*e*)

(*d*) Some ſuſpenſion of common affairs, ſome pauſe of temporal pain and pleaſure, is doubtleſs neceſſary to him that deliberates for eternity, who is forming the only plan in which miſcarriage cannot be repaired, and examining the only queſtion in which miſtake cannot be rectified.

The RAMBLER, vol. 3d.

(*e*) Religion's all.

DR. YOUNG.

SEASONABLE DIRECTIONS, *addreſſed to the candidates for retirement.*

Retire; the world ſhut out, thy thoughts call home.
DR. YOUNG.

SOME authors have beautifully deſcribed the charms of retirement, and the happineſs of thoſe who are maſters of their own time, and can employ it in works and contemplations, ſuitable to the duty and dignity of a rational and immortal being, who muſt give an account of his actions, and be judged according to his deeds.

Other writers, better acquainted with the human heart, have declaimed warmly againſt retirement, appealing to daily experience, which ſhews, that many who quitted buſineſs, ſoon had reaſon to repent of their raſhneſs, as having, in effect, condemned themſelves to perpetual gloomineſs and melancholy.

As theſe authors have viewed retirement in different lights, we need not wonder their ſentiments about it are ſo different; there is no doubt, that moſt of thoſe who did retire from buſineſs, ſeem to have been diſcontented in retirement, and would gladly return to their former employments, could they do it with decency; but it is equally certain, that ſuch unſteady minds have not previouſly conſidered how their time was to be filled up, and their thoughts employed in retirement, before they determined

termined to relinquiſh their reſpective profeſſions or occupations.

You may pleaſe yourſelf, (as perhaps all men in buſineſs do) with the hopes of enjoying eaſe and receſs in ſome *diſtant* period of your life; give me leave, therefore, to offer my opinion of what may be previouſly neceſſary to make you happy in that ſituation.

No man ought to retire from buſineſs while he has youth and vigour to purſue it. (*f*) If he retires through indolence, or voluptuouſneſs, beſides hurting himſelf, he is unjuſt to the community, which cannot ſubſiſt comfortably without the mutual labour and aid one of another: And if he retires from a motive of *religion*, he leaves half the taſk unperformed for which he was ſent into the world, according to the Apoſtle's direction, *not ſlothful in buſineſs, fervent in ſpirit, ſerving the Lord.* (*g*)

On the other hand, an old man ſhould not, through covetouſneſs, chooſe to ſink under the burden of his profeſſion, rather than throw it aſide; but, if his circumſtances will permit him, ſhould decently make his retreat from the buſy world, before his faculties are impaired, and he becomes the ſubject of cenſure or ridicule; and eſpecially, before it be too late to ſearch and know his own

(*f*) Man was created for the glory of his Maker, but on his fall, the curſe denounced againſt him was, IN THE SWEAT OF THY BROW SHALT THOU EAT BREAD: induſtry, activity and labour are evidently included and held out therein; no man (however rich he may be) ſhould give way to indolence, for action is abſolutely neceſſary, both to the health of the body and vigour of the mind.

(*g*) Romans 12: 11.

heart, which is a leſſon harder to learn, and more important, than perhaps he may imagine. (*b*)

A man's circumſtances ought to be independent before he pretends to quit buſineſs, either by being maſter of a large eſtate, which will enable him to live in affluence; or, by levelling his mind to a moderate fortune, and by having ſuch an abſolute command over his appetites, that they ſhall not deſire any gratification but what he can innocently and conveniently afford.

The maſters of overgrown eſtates, got in buſineſs, rarely know when they have enough; or, if ever they think of a retreat, it is too commonly from a vain affectation of ſpending in empty ſhow, and inhoſpitable grandeur, a ſmall part of what was amaſſed, perhaps, by rapine or parſimony. Such undiſciplined minds can form no notion of a *wiſe* and *virtuous* retirement.

A man of a moderate fortune (for it is to ſuch I write) has ſeveral things to conſider with reſpect to himſelf, and to his connections in life, before he ventures on retirement; he ought, in the firſt place, to be ſo far acquainted with his own heart, as to be fully ſatisfied, that no ſeeds of covetouſneſs lurk there, which may ſpring up to his diſquiet; leſt, by throwing himſelf out of an employment, which added daily to his income, his equanimity ſhould ſtagger, and he ſhould become afraid of poverty, after his gain has run into other channels, and his repentance will avail him nothing.

Let *him* never quit buſineſs whoſe heart is tainted with *avarice*, otherwiſe he will become his family's tormentor

(*b*) NOSCE TEIPSUM, was a favourite and truly important as well as neceſſary apophthegm of the heathen Philoſophers.

tormentor and his own too; and his frantic terrors of *imaginary* wants will be ſure to poiſon every bleſſing that he poſſeſſes.

He muſt, in the next place, take eſpecial care not to retire on account of any diſguſt or peeviſh humour, into which he has been thrown by diſappointments or ill uſage. No wiſe man, ſurely, would build any important reſolution upon a tranſient humour, which may ſoon change, and leave him to reflect with regret on his raſh conduct, when perhaps it is too late to rectify his error.

He muſt, in the *third* place, conſider, that it is not an eaſy matter to ſubdue old and ſtubborn habits: A round of buſineſs, in which an induſtrious man has moved, from morning to night, for many years, in which he knew how to employ every hour of his time, and often thought theſe hours too ſhort; ſuch an habitual round, I ſay, muſt at laſt become natural to him; to be, therefore, abruptly thrown out of it by retirement, where every ſpring of action is altered or loſt, muſt inevitably diſconcert him, and prove extremely irkſome. (*i*)

If a man has not previouſly conſidered what he was about to do; if he has not gradually weaned himſelf from his uſual attachments; and, above all, if he has not ſteadily reſolved to fill up, with ſome *new* employment, every vacuity which the loſs of his buſineſs muſt naturally make in his time, he will, like a fiſh out of water, pant after his former element; retirement will become like a priſon to him; he knows not how to employ his thoughts, and his mind will grow torpid through inaction.

(*i*) He will be quite at a loſs to know what to do from day to day, without he has ſome MENTAL as well as ACTIVE pleaſures and employments to fill up his vacant hours.

There is now no paſſion to rouſe him, no preſent gain to allure him, no variety to engage his attention as formerly, and no pleaſing intercourſe with perſons converſant in the ſame ſtudies, or aſſiduous in the ſame purſuits, to ſooth or relieve him; every moment, therefore, feels tedious to him, and he falls inſenſibly into a dejection of ſpirits, which, by precluding the hopes of good, and magnifying the apprehenſions of evil, renders him completely wretched; this is a rock that ſome wiſe and good men have ſtruck on, though by a little reflection, it might have been eaſily avoided; I was a few years ago well acquainted with an old man retired from buſineſs, whoſe time was ſo regularly employed, that when an unuſual occurrence broke in upon his *little ſcheme*, (as he called it) he thought himſelf obliged to quicken his diligence next day, in order to recover the hours he had loſt by that interruption. (*j*)

But beſides judging deliberately of his power over his own appetites, paſſions and habits, a man muſt likewiſe attend to his connections in life; if he has children, it is dangerous to quit buſineſs, becauſe, in caſe of unforeſeen misfortunes, they muſt be involved in his difficulties, though they have not his firmneſs to ſupport them; if he has a wife, he ſhould never retire without her deliberate approbation of his deſign, and without an equal diſpoſition in her to contentment and ſubmiſſion reſpecting all events; for ſuppoſe him to have any humanity, her ſufferings (ſhould any happen) muſt afflict him more than his own, eſpecially, if he has prevailed with her, againſt her inclination, to put her patience to ſo

(*j*) A very laudable example.

ſo ſevere a trial. Nay, if a man has relations of merit who depend upon him, humanity requires (in caſe his eſtate be not ſufficient to maintain them and himſelf) that he ſhould defer his retirement, until he can ſettle them in a rational way of maintaining themſelves by their own induſtry.

Laſtly, with regard to one's old companions and neighbours, it muſt be conſidered, that as intereſt is the ſtrongeſt band of union and good-will among men, ſo he, whoſe profeſſion is beneficial to his neighbours, will be ſure to poſſeſs their eſteem; but when once he has relinquiſhed that employment, which was the ſource of the reſpect paid him, he muſt expect to be ſlighted by thoſe, whoſe intereſt alone induced them to careſs him, ſuch neglect may at *firſt*, indeed, give ſome uneaſineſs to a generous and diſintereſted mind, but that uueaſineſs will ſoon be removed, when he reflects that it is no ſmall pleaſure to have an opportunity of diſtinguiſhing real from *pretended* friendſhips, (*k*) and that the coldneſs of narrow hearts, which mind only their own particular intereſt, deſerves rather to be *pitied* than reſented.

Let us now take a view of the other ſide, and ſuppoſe that a man has been guilty of no previous imprudence, with regard to his intended retreat, but has laid down a proper plan for the employment of his time; in ſuch a caſe, retirement ſhould be a delightful ſituation, at leaſt to old age; a welcome receſs from the fatigue, anxiety, diſſipation and diſappointments, which attend buſineſs, and which had ſo long prevented his attention to things of ſtill

(*k*) N. B. When ſelf-intereſt is the foundation, all profeſſions of friendſhip muſt be mere hypocriſy and baſe deluſion.

greater moment; an exemption from temptations to envy, fraud, flattery, diſſimulation, intemperance and revenge; and, in their ſtead, to enjoy a ſerenity of mind, undiſturbed by the falſe purſuits, impertinencies and ſnares of a buſy life, and to have leiſure for recollection and amendment: If a man has a juſt regard to the longeſt part of his duration, ſuch a change ſhould make him happy.

But though ſeveral vices may be avoided by retirement, there ſtill remain many to be conquered, which are ready to intrude upon that ſtate; and many virtues to be cultivated, ſufficient to give us full employment for every day of our lives, (*l*) if we carefully attend to them. I ſhall, for a ſpecimen, name only two of each ſort, of the vices, *peeviſhneſs* and *ſloth*, and of the virtues, *reſignation* and *beneficence*.

Among the vices apt to haunt retirement, is peeviſhneſs. When a man ſtands no longer in need of his friends, towards carrying on his affairs with ſucceſs, he often loſes that complaiſance which made him formerly agreeable, and ſometimes contracts a fretfulneſs and moroſeneſs of temper, which grow upon him by indulgence. Inſtead of complying with others in their innocent humours or amuſements, he ſtudies only to pleaſe himſelf. He diſcovers a dogmatical ſufficiency, and a bluntneſs in his converſation and behaviour, which, encreaſing by degrees, render him at laſt odious to his former companions, and inſupportable to his own family where the ſtorm falls heavieſt. But how ungenerous and indecent is it to indulge ſuch a habit! Is it not both mean and imprudent to exaſperate thoſe who ſtudy to pleaſe us? Is there no gratitude due for

(*l*) A truly good man never thinks he has any time to be idle.

for benefits we have received? Do we ceaſe to be ſocial creatures, becauſe we have quitted buſineſs? What true ſatisfaction can remain to him, whoſe ruſticity has driven all his diſintereſted friends away? That ſoul muſt be ſavage indeed, which feels no joy in pleaſing others. And though we ſhould ſuppoſe a peeviſh or moroſe man to be, in other reſpects, virtuous; yet ſtill ſuch a cynical virtue has much fewer charms than that which is attended with a mutual intercourſe of humanity and good-humour, and gives a reliſh to all our other bleſſings.

Another error ready to creep into our retreat is *ſloth*. When a man thinks he has made a comfortable proviſion for old age, and finds himſelf no longer obliged to toil for his daily ſubſiſtence, he is apt to fall from his former hurry, into the contrary extreme of ſloth and indolence; to riſe late, and to lay exerciſe aſide. But to this conduct, without calling in any moral conſideration, we need only oppoſe *health*; for he who, from much exerciſe in the courſe of his buſineſs, ſinks into lazineſs and indolence, will moſt certainly impair his health, and ſhorten his days. The humours which were kept in circulation by exerciſe will ſtagnate and grow acrimonious by ſloth, and bring on ſuch complaints as muſt make his life miſerable: reaſon and experience verify this obſervation; and he who thinks otherwiſe will ſoon be brought to conviction by his diſtempers. (*m*)

Of the virtues to be practiſed in retirement, I have alſo named two, *reſignation* and *beneficence*;

(*m*) Bodily exerciſe is abſolutely neceſſary to preſerve health; the chief deſign of the Almighty, in giving us hands and legs, ſeems to be that we might employ them, in adminiſtering to our own good or the good of others.

each of which is difficult to be attained, and yet extremely conducive to happineſs. It is not eaſy to acquire a habit of reſignation to the divine will; for when we have formed our own ſchemes, as we imagine, with prudence and precaution, we conclude that they ought to ſucceed according to our wiſhes; and, if they miſcarry, we are apt to murmur at the diſpenſations of Providence, and think our fate hard; though it frequently happens that, had they taken effect, we muſt inevitably have been ruined; but can any thing be more agreeable to right reaſon, more becoming weak and ignorant creatures, ſuch as we are, or more conducive to our peace of mind, than an entire reſignation to the diſpoſal of that Being, who has infinite wiſdom to contrive, infinite power to execute, and infinite goodneſs to direct, whatever can relate to our happineſs? Moſt certain it is, that he loſes the higheſt felicity which can be enjoyed on earth, who does not, with a chearful acquieſcence, rely on the Supreme Being, and, with a thankful heart, acknowledge his perpetual mercies.

Beneficence likewiſe is a virtue difficult to be attained, becauſe our ſympathy with people in diſtreſs is too often painful to us, and the aſſiſtance we may propoſe to give them may coſt us labour, time, or money; and the more extenſive our charity is, the greater ſtill is the trouble and expence attending it.

But the expediency of this virtue is manifeſt; for ſince we muſt have ſome intercourſe with mankind, as long as we live, and ſince no man knows whether he may not *himſelf* ſtand in need of help before he leaves the world, we cannot, in juſtice or in decency, expect kindneſs from others, unleſs we are ready to ſhew kindneſs in our turn.

Love

Love and be loved, is a maxim eſtabliſhed by every man's experience; and the great Father of the Univerſe, who knows that, of all his creatures, we ſhould be the moſt miſerable without the reciprocal aid of one another, has, for our own intereſt, commanded us to love our neighbours as ourſelves. (*n*)

Beſides, as we can make no recompence to God, for his continual favours to us, we ſhould ſhew our gratitude to him by our kindneſs to his creatures, and be glad, at his deſire, and for his ſake, to do all the good we can to our neighbours.

Having thus lightly touched on a few of the many virtues we ought to cultivate, and the many errors we ought to avoid in retirement, I ſhall only add a very ſhort ſketch of the proper employment of every day, to prevent our minds from growing torpid, our health from being impaired, and our hours from becoming tedious to us, through inaction.

Let him who has retired from buſineſs employ ſome thoughts, every morning early, in recollecting his paſt life, in ſearching his heart, and in preparing himſelf, after ſuch a manner, as may give him hopes of meeting with a gracious reception at that awful tribunal, where, by the courſe of nature, he muſt ſoon appear. (*o*) Let him, in the next place,

(*n*) Leviticus 19: 18.

(*o*) In the Country, gentlemen of independent fortunes too generally ſpend their time wholly in the purſuits of field ſports, Hunting, Shooting, and the like; or the intoxicating pleaſures of the bottle: and in Town little more or better is thought of, than how to kill time, by diverſions and amuſements, of the moſt dangerous tendency to the morals and diſpoſitions of the riſing generation.

What pity it is that Cards, Gaming, Senſuality, and Diſſipation, ſhould keep men and women, endowed with immortal, never dying

place, do ſomething in his own profeſſion, according to his capacity, and the opportunities of improvement which he has, allowing no day to paſs away without drawing (in imitation of Apelles) at leaſt one line; and let him always commit the reſult of his thoughts to writing, that he may have recourſe to it when he pleaſes, and not be obliged, either to redouble his labour, or loſe what he has acquired, when his memory may chance to be impaired.

Let him then (if the weather will permit) ride or walk abroad, to partake of thoſe rural pleaſures which ſo greatly contribute to health of body and vigour of mind. (*p*) What can gratify a man's ſenſes or reaſon more, than to view the various productions of the fields, and to contemplate the wonderful contrivance of Providence in their gradual increaſe, from the opening ſeed to the perfect plant? What an amazing number of inimitable beauties does the floriſt diſcern in the hyacinth, the tulip, the ranunculus, auricula, and polianthus, and in other flowers of the different ſeaſons. Or, if he chuſes to raiſe his eye from thoſe ſmaller objects to the great works of nature, what can fill the ſoul with a more awful idea of the author of our being, and with a greater complacency in his protection, than the magnificent proſpect of hills, lawns and rivers; mountains,

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dying ſouls, from thinking ſeriouſly on that awful Eternity, into which death will ſoon inevitably plunge them; and, if unprepared, O how dreadful muſt it be to reflect, that Eternity will only be to ſuch, another name for endleſs torment.

(*p*) Riding, Walking, Fiſhing, Shooting, and Hunting, are pleaſing exerciſes for a Country Gentleman, in fine weather; but when prevented from going out, by rain, &c. Reading, Writing, Meditation, or Converſation with a few friends, or Muſic, are rational amuſements.

mountains, ſeas and foreſts; with the auguſt view of the heavens; moſt of which we may behold from many delightful ſpots in Great Britain. But if he cannot go abroad, let him, within doors, employ himſelf in ſome bodily exerciſe, of which a great variety may be contrived. After this is done, he may ſpend the remainder of the day in viſiting and obliging his neighbours, or in ſuch innocent recreations and amuſements as may be moſt agreeable to his taſte and diſpoſition; and then cloſe the evening as he began the morning. (*q*)

In a word, let him be careful to keep his mind fully and rationally employed for the preſent, and his proſpect ſerene for the future. But, to prevent the loſs of that health, which gives a reliſh to all other enjoyments, let him not neglect the practice of *temperance* and daily *exerciſe*. (*r*)

(*q*) Be mine the lot to paſs unheeded through
Life's mazy path, and take a tranſient view
Of fleeting bliſs; while now and then a ſmile
Plays on my lips, each ſorrow to beguile:
Not over-fond of life, nor fearing death,
Content and tranquil I'll reſign my breath;
For, though with airy joys our fancies teem,
Sure life and death are but an anxious dream.

(*r*) See Dr. Mackenſie's Moral Eſſays.

A POETICAL ADDRESS *in favour of a rural life.*

CHAUNT on, ye warblers, from each verdant ſpray,
Bleat on, ye flocks, that in the meadows play;
Low on, ye herds, that range the dewy vales,
Murmur, ye rills, and whiſper ſoft, ye gales:
How bleſt my lot! in theſe ſweet fields aſſign'd,
Where peace and leiſure ſoothe the troubled mind.
For me the country boaſts enough to charm,
In the wild woodlands or the cultur'd farm.
Come, Celia, come, in town no longer ſtay,
From folly, noiſe and riot, haſte away;
The fields, trees, meads and flow'rs are all in bloom,
And vernal ſhow'rs awake the rich perfume;
Believe, my fair, tho' towns and crowds invite,
And city pleaſures promiſe great delight,
Soon the tir'd ſoul diſguſted turns from theſe,
While rural proſpects only long can pleaſe. (r)

(r) To him who has been long pent up in cities, no rural object can be preſented, which will not delight or refreſh ſome of his ſenſes.

MILTON.

An ESSAY

An ESSAY *on the beauties of the country.*

Here luſt no object for his fires can gain,
And pride wants gazers to admire her train.

BROWNE.

HERE, freed from every embarraſſment of form, and every concern of buſineſs, I riſe healthful, ſit down at eaſe, and trace the ſtrokes of Nature's pencil, till even the ſenſe aches to comprehend them. The inſufferable folly of unmeaning viſitants is over, and I hope never will return again. I am generally awakened by the rays of the riſing ſun breaking in at the eaſtern window; and, after the rural pleaſures of the day, retire at eight to my turfy ſeat, recline againſt the leaning oak that points full weſt, and fix my eyes upon the parting luminary, now a few minutes high, view his even progreſs to the horizon, and ſee him cut the verge of that great circle; then follow him deſcending till leſs remains, and ſay, with an involuntary ſigh, farewel, when the laſt ſpot of fire is ſunk beneath the plain.

Then glows the ſcene which painters have but faintly copied. The purple cloud, the golden edge, the flaming luſtre, in the juſt point where the great globe of fire deſcended, and thence the change that, through inumerable tincts, colours the whole extent of that vaſt quarter; the different ſhades form the reſemblance of a town on fire, to the light amber hue that loſes its faint glare upon the diſtant mountain.

The ſeaſons, as they change, will bring variety enough, and every period will be crouded with its peculiar pleaſures: but, of all others, this, the youth of

of the juſt ripening year, carries delight in every object, and in every inſtance. To trace the firſt buds of the leafy ſpring, to ſee the hawthorn ſwell with its vernal treaſures; the rough elm next burſt into floods of verdure, the yellow oak then thruſt out its vaſt bud, and, laſt, the ſlow aſh puſh its winged leaves to fill the ſcene of beauty!---Theſe are the objects every hedge affords, and every field its humbler elegancies. To mark the opening of the lively daiſy, to ſee the yellow crowfoot ſpread its gilded coat over whole acres of the higher grounds, or trace the bluſhing ladyſmock that fill its thick tufts, the lower! To follow in the hedge the wild herbs as they ſpring, and mark their wonderful and various forms; the hyacinth, bending its naked ſtalk with fragrance; the arum ſhrouded in his leafy tabernacle, and the young fruit in every opening flower! How various in their ſeveral forms, and how amazing in the whole!

Full of theſe wonders and theſe charms, this luſty health and ſpringing vigor in mild natures, how ſweet the change to look into the quarters made by art, there to indulge that

. . . . . Retired leiſure,
That in trim gardens takes its pleaſure!

And as one treads the ſmooth pavement of the gravel, or velvet carpet of the graſs-walk, to watch the produce of luxuriant culture, day brings after day new tranſports; flower opens after flower; and every morning diſcloſes ſome new beauty, dearer to the poſſeſſor, becauſe his own toil helped its colours.

How raviſhing to tread the ſmooth alley ſeparating one painted border from another! To trace the

the progreſs of the full anemonies, or watch the colours of the painted tulip! To follow, in the former kinds, the violet, the crimſon, and the purple, whoſe colours ſingly recommend them to the admiration; and when the eye has been feaſted whole days with theſe, to ſee the peacock ſpread his double leaves, varying his ruby with the emerald, to admire the bluſhing luſtre of the roſe, or trace the changes of the ever-new camelion! With what amazing ſatisfaction!

Thence to another quarter glowing with the vivid tulips, to view, with a diſtinguiſhing and raptured eye, the mixed tincts ſeparated by the ſtrongeſt lines, no one intrenching on the other's boundaries; to read them opening, and to ſee them fade, preſerving ſtill the ſame clear character! To count the colours in the varied marquetrine; to view the clouds that paint the wanton jaſper, elegant without regularity, and glorious in confuſion; to mark the ſtains of the morillon, or ſee the ſaphire of the ſky mimicked in the round bottom of the painted *Perſian!* The delight is not, nor can be known, but to the few, whoſe innocent leiſure has employed ſome hours in the ſweet ſtudy.

My paintings are from Nature; from what I ſee before me as I write to you. My own field, and my own hedges, give the originals of my heart-felt deſcriptions; and my little garden furniſhes the beauties I have juſt celebrated: my heart joins the great chorus with gratitude and ſincerity, relating only what it really feels.

Thus paſs the hours of one who wiſhes every man to rival him in ſatisfaction. There is ſomething in theſe ſoft delights that ſurpaſſes all the ſenſualiſt calls pleaſure. Quiet and health accompany every ſtep; and the path is open to every virtue.

Reflections

Reflections on the nature, qualifications and employments of a retired life. An EXTRACT.

LET us consider what kind of life is to be understood by a *retired* one. And the ends or reasons warranting the choice of such a life; First, *Enjoyment*; Secondly, *Self-preservation* from the assaults of *temptation*; Thirdly, The better serving the world; Fourthly, A more entire dedication of one's self to God. Let us further consider the conditions or qualifications necessary to a retired life; First, A plentiful fortune; Secondly, A peaceable and humble disposition; Thirdly, a good understanding. Let us consider Lastly, The regulation of a retired life; with respect, First, To time; Secondly, To place; Thirdly, To the exercise or employment of a retired life with the conclusion, containing the pleasure and happiness of such a life.

The first thing that offered itself to my thoughts, taking a view of this subject, was the Collegiate life of scholars in the Universities; but besides that here they do not so much design to retire from the world, as to prepare themselves for it; (*s*) I had reason to think, whatever service I could propose to do the public by any advice I could here offer, my zeal would never be able to attone for my presumption, since these seminaries of learning are under the conduct and direction of the ablest, not of this age only, but

(*s*) In Colleges, Universities, and such-like places of public learning, persons may live a life of study and retirement; but this is very different from the simplicity, innocence, and rural pleasures of a country life.

but of thoſe paſt: I do not, therefore, calculate this diſcourſe for theſe, but for perſons of another education, and under no direction but their own; for ſuch, who make their retreat from the world on being tired and ſated with its corroding cares, anxieties and diverſions, and for ſuch, whoſe inclination or fortune may lead them to ſeek, and enable them to enjoy a private, quiet and contemplative life; to theſe, I offer myſelf as a companion; I would enter with them into their privacies, and aſſiſt them to paſs their hours with true pleaſure innocence and advantage; I would inſpire them, if I could, with wiſe and excellent thoughts; I would engage them in the moſt neceſſary and moſt delightful buſineſs of human life, and guard them againſt thoſe evils and follies which are apt to inſinuate themſelves into the moſt ſolitary and retired life. (*t*)

I muſt here, in the next place, repeat an obſervation which I think I have ſome where before made, that the life of man muſt be neither wholly *contemplative*, nor wholly *active*; for, as action and buſineſs, without any meditation, are apt to alienate the mind from God and virtue, to corrupt all that is great, generous, and truly wiſe in it, and wed it wholly to the world; ſo I doubt a life ſpent wholly in contemplation, without any mixture of action, will prove fruitleſs and unprofitable; and men condemned to utter ſolitude, like the trees and ſhrubs of the wilderneſs, would grow wild and ſavage, luxuriant in leaves, but their fruit, if they brought forth any, ſour and

(*t*) It has been obſerved with no little propriety, that it is a difficult taſk to be idle and innocent; great care is neceſſary in retirement, reſpecting the government of our thoughts, management of our time, and regulation of our amuſements.

and ſmall. (*u*) They forget the nature and the cuty of man, and talk not ſeraphically but fantaſtidally, whoever perſuade men to give up themſelves entirely to contemplation: man is yet a mixed and compound being; when he becomes all ſpirit, let him be all thought: he is yet a citizen of *this* world, although he be deſtined for another; let him not forget that there are virtues becoming him as ſuch; (*v*) let him live by intuition, when he comes into the perfect light, and enters into the beatific preſence; let him live by raptures, when he is come into a world where wants and frailties, pains and evils cannot enter, and are known no more. In the mean time, let man content himſelf with the practice of human virtue, and the duties of religion, in this frail and probationary ſtate, and not dream of the flights which only *angels* take. Having thus taken care, firſt to raiſe no expectation in my reader, which might afterwards be fruſtrated; and next prevented his being betrayed into any extravagance by projecting a more abſtracted life, than the nature of man and the preſent world will admit, I will now proceed to diſcourſe of theſe three things:

Firſt, The reaſons and ends of a retired life.

Secondly,

(*u*) Men are endowed with rational and active powers and faculties, formed for the enjoyment of ſocial, as well as calculated to improve the duties of a retired and contemplative life. A daily mixture of action and reflection ſeems beſt calculated for the nature of man, and moſt ſuited to our preſent ſituation in the world.

(*v*) The duties belonging to the relations, of a creature to his creator, a ſubject to his ſovereign, a huſband to his wife, a father to his children, a maſter to his ſervants, a good neighbour, a real friend, a worthy member of ſociety, and a true chriſtian, are all equally neceſſary to be attended to, and practiſed, by every man who bears theſe ſeveral characters in the world.

Secondly, The neceſſary qualifications for it. And,

Thirdly, The due regulations of it.

Firſt, Of the reaſons, &c. Some propoſe to themſelves only eaſe and enjoyment, as the great end and deſign of their retirement; (*w*) now though this be a mean and low project, little becoming the excellence of our chriſtian profeſſion, yet I cannot but acknowledge, that it ſeems to be an abſurd and irrational thing, to wear out life in a continual hurry or drudgery; it appears to me but reaſonable, that men ſhould one time or other allow eaſe to the body, and quiet to the mind; ſhould ſet both free from their ſervitude to the world, and enjoy the wealth which they have got together, and eat the fruit of their travel and care. (*x*) But though this be true, yet if men do quit buſineſs, only to give themſelves up to the pleaſures of the world; if they exchange their anxiety and toil for luxury and ſenſuality, and, inſtead of being induſtrious, plodding and thriving traders, become idle, or, which is worſe, looſe and riotous country gentlemen; this, I muſt confeſs, is but a miſerable change; this is but to profane retirement, abuſe plenty, and waſte that precious time which God has made them maſters of: this, in a word, is not for a man to quit

(*w*) This end, in retiring from the buſy world, is too mean, ignoble, ſelfiſh, and indolent, to be aſſigned or intended by a man of ſenſe, diſcernment, piety, and reputation.

(*x*) The labourer undoubtedly is worthy of his hire; but let thoſe who have got riches, either by inheritance or labour, know, that they were not born for themſelves, but to do good, and to communicate of their wealth to others, who are poor, neceſſitous, and in real want of their bounty, virtuous example, and generous aſſiſtance.

quit his ſlavery, but to exchange his maſters; for as to the intereſt of another life, and the true end of this, 'tis much the ſame thing, whether a man be a ſervant to pleaſure and ſloth, or to covetouſneſs and ambition. (*y*)

The ſum of this matter is plainly this; 'tis undoubtedly lawful for ſuch as have been long toiling in the purſuit of the world, to retire (if circumſtances and inclination concur in it) and enjoy themſelves and the company of their friends; nay, further, I count them moſt happy, who ſeem born not to ſtruggle and contend with the world, but to enjoy it; but if by *enjoyment* be here underſtood, only the gratification of the humour by outward, though innocent pleaſures, I muſt affirm, that this is too mean and low, to be the chief end, either of the one's entrance into the world, or the other's retreat from it: But if, which is worſe, by *enjoyment* be here meant growing fat with good eating and drinking, or as it were rank and rotten through eaſe and ſloth, I deny this to be the enjoyment of a man, much leſs of a philoſopher or Chriſtian: (*z*)

The *enjoyment* of a private life, or philoſophical receſs, ought to conſiſt in peace and order, in harmony and exaltation, in a holy calm and ſerenity, in which, (as in a clear day, from the top of ſome advantageous

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(*y*) Men may be as great ſlaves to pleaſure (and too often are ſo) as many are, through covetouſneſs, ſlaves to buſineſs all their lives; and who, when they die, leave their overgrown wealth to thoſe, who take as much pains to ſquander it away, as they did to heap it up.

(*z*) A wiſe man, retired from the buſy and commercial world, ſpends his leiſure hours to better and nobler purpoſes, than in the purſuit of ſenſual pleaſures, or brutal gratifications; as he is well aſſured he muſt give an account of his time, it is his daily aim to redeem it, in preparing for eternity.

advantageous height) we enjoy an enlarged and delightful proſpect. (*a*) When we look backwards we behold a wide ſea, covered with a vaſt number of all ſorts of veſſels, toſſed up and down at the mercy of winds and waves: ſome few ſeem to make out with a ſteady courſe, but are immediately encountered with croſs winds and ſtorms, a very few indeed return in triumph homewards, and of theſe ſome miſcarry almoſt in ſight of port; of all the reſt, a great part, with much toil and difficulty, do ſcarcely live in ſtreſs of ſeas and weather, but the far greater part do ſuffer wreck, and ſcatter their miſerable ruins on every coaſt. But when we look forward, we diſcover a rich and ſecure country, thinly inhabited indeed, but filled with all the marks of joy and victory.

But whither will my imagination lead me? The enjoyment of the retired chriſtian conſiſts in the pleaſant and improving reflections he makes on his happy eſcape out of a tempeſtuous and deluding world; (*b*) in the commerce and intercourſe he maintains with that better world above, in a calm and leiſurely ſurvey of all the various and wonderful works of God, the worlds of grace and nature, and laſtly, in a very intimate and familiar acquaint-

(*a*) In retirement, we have an opportunity of reflecting on our paſt lives, with proper attention, of ſuitably mending what we find amiſs, either in thought, word or action, and improving our paſſing moments in the practice of Virtue, Piety and Meditation.

(*b*) Sweet Solitude! when life's gay hours are paſt,
Howe'er we range, in thee we fix at laſt;
Toſt thro' tempeſtuous ſeas, the voyage o'er,
Glad we look back and bleſs the friendly ſhore.

TICKELL.

ance with themſelves, and the daily habitual practice of pleaſing virtues and religious duties.

Secondly, One true end of *retirement* may be ſelf-defence, or preſervation.

An active life is a ſtate of war, and the world is an hoſtile country; ſnares and ambuſhes are laid every where for us, and ever and anon various temptations, accompanied with worldly and fleſhly luſts, which St. Peter tells us, *war againſt the ſoul*, do endeavour either to court and betray us, or to drive and force us into death and ruin; (*c*) therefore, if we are conſcious to ourſelves of our own weakneſs, we have reaſon not to expoſe ourſelves to dangers, which we have not courage nor ſtrength enough to vanquiſh; and to chooſe retirement not as a ſtate of perfection, but of ſafety. (*d*)

The meaſures of grace, the ſtrength of reaſon and the inclinations of nature are very different in different men; whoever, therefore, upon the beſt ſurvey he can make of his own forces, and after ſome, not inſincere trials, finds himſelf no match for the world, unable to countenance its policies and oppoſe its power; ſuch a one, if he can, may, nay, I believe, ought to retire from the world, as from the face of a too potent enemy; (*e*) for though war

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(*c*) The world's a ſtately bark, with pleaſure ſeen,
But boarded at our peril. DR. YOUNG.

(*d*) Let him who wiſhes for an effectual cure to all the wounds the world can inflict, retire from intercourſe with men to intercourſe with God.

BLAIR'S SERMONS.

(*e*) Retreat from too powerful an enemy, is no mark of Cowardice, but of true Prudence, good Policy, and right Diſcernment.

war be fuller of glory, peace is of ſecurity; and though an active and buſy life be in itſelf more ſerviceable to the good of mankind and the honour of God, yet, in this caſe, a poor weak Chriſtian may prefer a contemplative one as the ſecurer; and this is not to decline the ſervice of God and man, but ſin and danger; 'tis not to prefer eaſe and ſecurity before ſpiritual induſtry and glory, but before a raſh preſumption, and a fatal defeat or overthrow. (*f*)

Thirdly, Another end of retirement may be to render us more beneficial to the world. The different talents of different perſons do ſeem to mark them out, and deſtine them to different kinds of life. There are, if I may ſo ſpeak, *active* and *contemplative* gifts; and 'tis a great felicity for any one to know himſelf ſo well, as to diſcern what the God of Nature has deſigned him for. Some, who are a diſgrace to a *public* ſtation, would be an ornament to a *private* one. (*g*) Many, who *act* but aukwardly, *think* and *meditate* very wiſely and accurately; and ſome, who do but expoſe themſelves in buſineſs, would paſs very well in retirement, and prove excellent examples of innocence and virtue, and wonderfully oblige, by their good-nature, ſweetneſs and charity, all ſuch as ſhould live within the reach of their influence.

(*f*) To fly from an enemy we cannot conquer, or endeavour to avoid thoſe temptations we cannot overcome, are the dictates of right reaſon, and enforced by the precepts of religion.

(*g*) It would be well if parents, in placing out their children in the world, conſulted more the talents and diſpoſitions of their offſpring; perſons, though it may be, in the poſſeſſion of riches, honours and preferments, are not always born to ſhine in thoſe exalted ſtations, in which (through intereſt) they may get placed in.

None are wont more earneſtly to covet retirement, than ſuch who are naturally addicted to learning; (*h*) men too plain or great for a crafty and ſubtle world; too generous, tender and eaſy for a buſtling, vexatious and ſtingy one: theſe are the men, who, when they are maſters of their wiſhes, ſeem more particularly obliged to dedicate themſelves to ſome eminent ſervice of the public; theſe muſt not bury their talents, but *brighten* them in quiet and retirement; like guardian angels, they ſhould procure the honour and happineſs of the palaces which they ſeldom or never appear to, and withdrawing only, not to avoid the ſervice, but the *foolery* of the world, (*i*) they muſt ever maintain an active charity and compaſſion for thoſe they leave behind caught and entangled in it, and muſt out of gratitude labour to obtain ſome bleſſing or other upon that government, to whoſe protection they owe the comforts and ſecurity of their retreat.

But though this direction does more immediately concern ſuch as theſe, that is, men of parts, yet ſure there are none utterly exempt from this obligation of procuring the public good in their proportion. Who is there ſo deſtitute of the gifts of grace, nature, or fortune, as to have no mite to caſt into the public treaſury? He that dares not pretend to attempt the enlightening or reforming the world, can yet adviſe and comfort his ignorant or

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(*h*) The love of retirement has in all ages adhered very cloſely to thoſe minds, which have been moſt enlarged by knowledge, or elevated by genius. DR. JOHNSON.

(*i*) Vanity and folly are written upon every earthly pleaſure, therefore the wiſe man recommends improving time in preparing for eternity. ECCLESIASTES 9: 10.

or afflicted neighbour; (*j*) he who is not qualified to give advice may yet give alms, which very often is as ſolid and ſubſtantial a benefit; and he who cannot do this can yet never be excuſed offering up daily prayers for the peace and welfare of his country, for the preſervation and edification of the church, for the converſion of ſinners, &c. nay he may proceed to what particularities he ſhall ſee fit or neceſſary, both in his petitions and thankſgivings; and from theſe interceſſions both the public and private may, for aught I know, reap more true and valuable benefit, than from the works and labours of the learned, or from the alms and bounty of the rich. (*k*)

To conclude, He that leads the moſt private and ſequeſtered life, and is too of the pooreſt endowments, can yet never be ſuppoſed utterly incapable of rendering any the leaſt ſervice to others, ſince the ſingle example of virtue and integrity, and the warmth of a pious and edifying converſation, is of the greateſt uſe. Some way or other, therefore, the moſt ſolitary life ought to ſerve the public, that ſo retirement may not miniſter to wantonneſs and ſloth, but piety and virtue, and the world may not loſe a member, while living, but enjoy its ſervice in its proper place, (*l*) and moſt effectual manner.

(*j*) Let every man improve the talents he is endowed with; whether they conſiſt of riches, knowledge, ſolid judgment, or the gifts of divine grace.

(*k*) There is not a man upon earth, from the higheſt to the loweſt, the richeſt to the pooreſt, the wiſeſt to the mere idiot, but who may be of ſome ſervice in his place and ſtation; the Almighty never made any thing in vain.

(*l*) To live at a diſtance from, yet near enough to do good to mankind, is acting like a benign deity on earth.

ABP. of CAMBRAY.

Fourthly, The main end of retirement from the world ſhould be, I think, to dedicate ourſelves more entirely to God. The philoſopher thought indeed a contemplative life the moſt happy one, but thought it at the ſame time a bleſſing too great for mortal men, too high for this frail nature, and above the ſtate and condition of this troubleſome world; he had a great deal of reaſon on his ſide, yet we muſt ſtill preſs on towards that perfection which we cannot attain, and it is a ſufficient reaſon for our doing ſo, that we ſhall be the more likely of approaching nearer to it. (*m*) Though, therefore, what ſome monkiſh authors have writ of a ſolitary life, equalling almoſt the duties and pleaſures of it to thoſe of an angelical one; though this, I ſay, may ſeem rather holy romance and enthuſiaſm than grave and ſound doctrine, yet ſure it cannot be denied, but that the prophets, the *Nazarites*, and the *Eſſens*, amongſt the Jews, and many devout and excellent perſons amongſt the Chriſtians, as well in the pureſt as corrupted ages of the church, have choſe and coveted ſolitude and deſarts, (*n*) I mean not uninhabited places, for that, if it were ſo, was an exceſs and extravagance, but calm and ſilent retreats from the noiſe and impertinence, from the hurry and diſtraction of much buſineſs and much acquaintance;

(*m*) There is no little merit in aiming at a lofty mark, though we may never hit it.

(*n*) In woods and groves the patriarchs retir'd,
To worſhip God, with holy zeal inſpir'd;
RURAL CHRISTIAN.

. . . . . .
Remote from man, with God he paſt his days,
Pray'r all his buſineſs, all his pleaſure, praiſe.
PARNELL'S HERMIT.

acquaintance; and, ſince they did ſo, their example ſeems to teach us, that this ſtate may be made eminently uſeful to our own good, and God's glory.

Here a man ſeems to have little elſe to do, but to praiſe God and improve himſelf; to amend the errors of his paſt life, and correct and ſubdue whatever he feels amiſs in himſelf at preſent; to perfect and augment his graces, and dreſs and adorn his ſoul for the feſtival ſolemnities and triumphs of another and better world; (*o*) now he ſeems to have nothing to do but to begin his Halleluiahs, to advance into the borders and confines of Heaven by faith and devotion, and from the heights of meditation, to ſurvey, as from the next advantageous hill, the riches and the pleaſures of that *Canaan* which he ſhall in a few moments enter into; and by this method, no doubt of it, as he ſhall enlarge his appetite and capacity of happineſs, ſo ſhall he enlarge his ſhare in it; (*p*) by this method, he ſhall adorn religion, and repreſent it to the world as moſt lovely and moſt uſeful; he ſhall prove it to be unſpeakably delightful in itſelf; he ſhall render the world more eaſy to him, and Heaven more deſirable; and, when he comes to the banks of *Jordan*, that is of death, which parts this world from the other, he ſhall find the ſtreams of it divided to make him way; that is, the troubles and terrors of it diſſipated, and he ſhall paſs through it full of humble gratitude for the bleſſings of his paſt

(*o*) Retire, and read thy bible to be gay,
There truths abound of ſovereign aid to peace.
NIGHT THOUGHTS.

(*p*) The ſoul poſſeſt of faith, of hope and love,
With rapture antedates the joys above.

life, and raviſhing hopes and deſires as to thoſe of the future. (*q*)

Theſe are the proper and rational ends of withdrawing from the world, though I am not ignorant that there may be ſeveral other inducements to it; ſuch as digeſting a diſcontent or diſgrace, the curing ſome paſſion which would be otherwiſe nouriſhed by converſing with its object, and the mere eſcaping from the troubles and noiſe of the world; and, as ſome men are forced out of their retreats into the world, not without great ſervice to the public, ſo are there others, who, if they had ſenſe enough to know themſelves, or modeſty enough to hear the advice of their friends, ſhould betake themſelves to a *private* life, (*r*) to prevent the miſchiefs in which they are like to involve themſelves and others; ſuch are men of bold and enterprizing tempers, without ſufficiency, men of zeal and activity without underſtanding. But I deſigned not here ſo much to conſider what might induce men to embrace a quiet, ſilent life, as what ends they were to propoſe to themſelves when they were in it, which having done, I will paſs on to the ſecond thing.

Sect. 2. The qualifications which fit men for a retired life; and theſe are, I think, three.

Firſt, A plentiful, or at leaſt, *competent* fortune. (*ſ*)

Secondly,

(*q*) Religion alone can reconcile a good man to parting with all earthly comforts, and make a death bed eaſy and ſerene.

Religion only can our wants reſtrain,
The mind ſupport beneath corporeal pain,
Make life more ſweet, and death eternal gain.

(*r*) Every man ſhould conſult his own genius, talents and circumſtances, before he reſolves on a retired life.

(*ſ*) A ſenſible perſon cannot think of retiring from the buſy world, to enjoy the pleaſures of a rural life, without having ſomething beforehand.

Secondly, A mild and humble diſpoſition or, at leaſt, a quiet and compoſed mind.

Thirdly, A good underſtanding.

Firſt, A plentiful fortune. 'Tis true, that a competency is ſufficient to render a retired life eaſy, and when any one betakes himſelf to it as a refuge or ſanctuary againſt the hoſtilities and perſecution of temptations, this is abundantly enough; but where a contemplative life is a matter of *choice*, not *neceſſity*, a plentiful fortune is of great uſe, and a great ornament; it will enable him to do many works of charity, which ſhall have much delight in them, (*t*) without toil or diſturbance; it will furniſh him with all uſeful means of public and private devotion, and with whatever is neceſſary to enable him to paſs his time both rationally and delightfully.

I think I have expreſſed my thoughts clearly; but, to prevent all miſtakes, I will add, by a plentiful fortune I do not mean a *great* one; this is more commonly burdenſome, than uſeful to a private life, (*u*) and more apt to incumber than to promote the true ends of it. In my retirement, I would have decency and order, but not ſtate and ſhow; I would have comely plenty, but not a toilſome affluence; for the buſineſs of ſolitude is to raiſe the mind, not to entangle and enſlave it.

But the meaſures of this wealth muſt finally be determined by every man's own boſom, for it ought to be proportioned to the temper and genius, to the

(*t*) The rich and great, the powerful and exalted among mankind, have nothing to be envied for ſo much, as their abilities and opportunities of doing good to the poor, neceſſitous, and diſtreſt.

(*u*) Agur ſeem'd to be far from an ambitious or covetous man, as may be eaſily ſeen from his prayer recorded in the 30th chapter of Proverbs and 8th verſe.

capacities and abilities of the perſon who retires; and to the more immediate deſign and ends of his retirement; and after all, there is no greater ſtreſs to be laid on this qualification than this, it is *convenient* but not *eſſential*; (*v*) though a wiſe man may make an excellent uſe of it, 'tis not ſo abſolutely and ſo indiſpenſably neceſſary, but that he may be happy without it, both in public and private. (*w*)

Secondly, The pleaſure and ſucceſs of retirement depend greatly upon a man's natural temper and genius, that it be calm and quiet, as well as meek and humble; and if it is not ſo naturally, it muſt be made ſo, for a proud and ambitious, a reſtleſs and turbulent perſon, will in vain ſeek for that reſt and repoſe in ſequeſtering himſelf from the world, which is to be found only in the ſubduing his paſſions, and reforming his nature. He that is fond of opinion and eſteem, he that is at the diſpoſal of fancy and humour, and not able to ſhake off the yoke of faſhions and cuſtoms, will find much to torment him, but nothing to improve or delight him in his retirement: but, on the other hand, the meek and humble man will find his garden a Paradiſe, (*x*) and his ſolitude a converſing with God and Heaven he will enjoy the preſent, without

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(*v*) Riches, however they cannot procure happineſs, (though ſo eagerly coveted and deſired) yet they may and do contribute to our enjoyment of earthly good.

(*w*) Contentment not being the offſpring of wealth, a man may be happy, and often is happier with a little, than he who poſſeſſes thouſands a year; for cares and anxiety naturally attend riches.

(*x*) The pleaſure attending the cultivating of a garden, is truly rational as well as conducive to health: and comes the neareſt to the employment and delight of our firſt parents in Paradiſe.

out any further proſpect or ambition, reſpecting this world; he will meditate without diſtraction on the future; and worſhip and praiſe God as if he had no other buſineſs or deſign, and do all the good he can in his little ſphere, as if it were the only pleaſure and entertainment of the life which he has choſen.

'Tis one of the great privileges of retirement, to be able to neglect fantaſtic and imaginary good, and purſue after that only which is ſolid and ſubſtantial; to be the maſters of our own time and actions, and to model life by our own reaſon and inclinations, not the fancies and humours of others. (y)

'Tis the great advantage of retirement, that a man has all the pleaſures he can rationally deſire within his own reach, that all of the world that is grateful to him is to be found within the vicinity of his own private abode. He, therefore, whoſe mind gads abroad, and hankers after foreign pleaſures, who is tainted with envy or emulation; who hunts after eſteem, and is diſcompoſed by the fancy and cenſures of others, muddies the pure ſtream, corrupts and adulterates the true taſte and reliſh of retired life. This, therefore, ought to be the firſt endeavour of him who ſeeks happineſs in a retreat; to free his mind from all thoſe buſy and ambitions paſſions, which will diſturb his repoſe, (z) and corrupt his taſte, and to reduce it to

(y) Retirement in this view is often term'd the trueſt enjoyment.

(z) 'Tis certain, that a retired life has a greater tendency to make us happy than a public life; becauſe, in the former, the mind is not ſo much diſturbed by the paſſions, as in the tumult of ſociety;

its native purity and ſimplicity, in which it will be able to reliſh the bleſſings of true liberty, of eaſy and innocent pleaſures, of true and artleſs friendſhip, of regular and undiſturbed devotion, and, finally, of calm and elevated meditation.

Thirdly, A good underſtanding is a neceſſary qualification for retirement. It requires no little prudence to guard ourſelves againſt thoſe evils or impertinencies, which will be apt to invade or inſinuate themſelves into our ſolitude; decently to decline buſineſs, acquaintance, ceremonies, and diverſions, (I mean ſuperfluous and unneceſſary ones) which will rob us of our time and liberty, and obſtruct us in all the wiſe ends we propoſed to ourſelves, is a matter of no ordinary dexterity and addreſs. Nor does it require leſs underſtanding to preſerve the peace and order of a private family; and yet 'tis in vain to ſhun the infection that is abroad, if more fatal and ſtubborn maladies reign at home. (*a*)

Nay further, the family of the contemplative man ought not only to give him no diſturbances, but, if poſſible, it ought to be moulded and compoſed to his own humour, and animated by inclinations ſomewhat at leaſt a-kin to his own: after all, let us ſuppoſe the man ſo entirely ſequeſtered, as to be utterly diſengaged from all other intereſts but his own; to have no dependence upon any other's will or

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ſociety; and from ſome of the paſſions it is intirely exempt: Hatred, envy, and ambition, have no hold of a perſon in retirement. He ſees nobody; of whom then ſhould he be jealous? He deſires nothing more than what he has; whom ſhould he envy? He hates the world and its grandeur; how then can he be ſuſceptible of ambition?

(*a*) If a man's enemies are thoſe of his own houſe, he can have little or no peace at home.

or motion; to have none but himſelf to regard, no other to pleaſe, and no other to improve; even here I cannot tell whether ſo abſolute a liberty does not need the greater wiſdom to moderate and govern it, (*b*) and whether it does not require a larger capacity, to find a proper and wiſe employment for one whoſe fortune has tied him to none at all.

They are no *ordinary* endowments, which will enable one, free from all buſineſs, to ſpend his time *profitably* and *pleaſantly*; and yet, if he does not, he will be liable to the worſt of evils; he will diſſolve and putrify in ſloth, or elſe turn ſour and ſavage, churliſh and brutiſh, through ignorance, diſguſt, and diſcontent; and ſoon be nauſeated with a life that affords him nothing new and nothing taking; (*c*) the book of nature lies open before him, 'tis true; but he cannot read it; (*d*) 'tis not every vulgar eye that diſcerns the delicate touches of a ſkilful pencil, the curious and ſubtle mixtures of light and ſhade in a well drawn piece; 'tis not every ſpectator can judge of the beauty, ſtrength and convenience of a well contrived building; his library may be well furniſhed, but if the retired man has nothing bookiſh in him, no taſte for reading, no genius for eloquence, no ear for the muſic of

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(*b*) No little ſhare of wiſdom and prudence is requiſite, to keep the mind free from vexation, evil thoughts and diſturbing paſſions, in a life of ſolitude and retirement.

(*c*) To reſolve againſt a life of ſolitude and retirement, becauſe ſome who live retired are guilty of crimes, is like him who reſolves not to ſend for a phyſician when he is ill, becauſe ſome who are ill, die.

(*d*) All nature is but art unknown to thee,
All chance, direction which thou canſt not ſee.
POPE.

of wit and fancy, no judgment for hiſtory, no comprehenſion for arts or ſciences, what is a library or cabinet to him? Though furniſhed ever ſo well, either for uſe or rarity, 'tis only fit to be ſhewn, or to ſleep in; for, after all the coſt and ſkill laid out upon them, the couch is more ſuitable furniture than either of them.

But there is *friendſhip*, ſay you; there is I allow the *name* indeed, but the thing itſelf is too divine; a low and groveling ſoul, a dull and impenetrable temper cannot diſcern the charms, nor taſte the ſweets of *real* friendſhip; (*e*) what is that familiarity which is incapable of tenderneſs or paſſion? What is that converſation which is incapable of variety or depth, of wit or judgment? But there is *Religion*, ſay you; there is true *devotion*, I grant, a boundleſs field of profit and delight; and the principles of this are plain and ſtrong, able to move the man of the loweſt capacity to decline evil, follow his calling, and do good in proportion to his ſenſe and ability; (*f*) but as to ſeraphic, contemplative religion, for this to be the whole life and buſineſs of a man, it requires a vaſt capacity, raiſed and refined notions, and little leſs than real enthuſiaſm; I mean a truly divine *impetus* or ardour, impreſſed or inkindled in the ſoul, by the exuberant influxes of the bleſſed Spirit.

In a word, he, who in his retreat is entirely maſter of himſelf and his time, had need of talents to employ

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(*e*) Where heart meets heart reciprocally ſoft,
Each other's pillow to repoſe divine.
DR. YOUNG.

(*f*) Religion! . . . . . .
Supporter ſole of man above himſelf,
She gives the ſoul a ſoul that acts a God.
NIGHT THOUGHTS.

ploy and divert him, (*g*) to find him buſineſs and pleaſure, and to enable him to reap benefit from the one, and to preſerve his innocence in the other; (*h*) and, without this degree of underſtanding, a ſolitary life muſt be very dull and barren; nor can I think of any cure for this, but to encreaſe a man's taſk and buſineſs in proportion to the defect of his underſtanding, that ſo, employment may fill thoſe vacuities which contemplation never can. (*i*) This puts me in mind to advance on to the third thing propoſed.

Sect. 3. The regulations of a retired life, which regard either, *Firſt*, The time; *Secondly*, The place; or, *Thirdly*, The exerciſe and employment of retirement. *Firſt*, As to time. Though contemplation, more or leſs, ought to enter into every part of onr lives, yet the moſt ſeaſonable time of giving ourſelves more entirely up to it is the *evening* of life, the declenſion of our age; we have then or ſhould have had our fill of the world, and ſhall not be likely to hanker after it; we have ſeen the emptineſs of it, and ſhall be more likely to fix upon ſolid good; we ſhall then value our peace and calm the more, after we have been long toſſed by ſtorms;

(*g*) He who is not ſufficiently important to be diſturbed in his purſuits, but ſpends all his hours according to his own inclination, and has more hours than his mental faculties enable him to fill, either with enjoyment or deſires, can have nothing to demand of ſhades and vallies.

The RAMBLER.

(*h*) 'Tis very hazardous for perſons to be left to themſelves, unleſs they have a good head-piece, and a well ſettled mind.

(*i*) As it is frequently ſaid, an idle man is the devil's playfellow, it is therefore abſolutely neceſſary to be conſtantly employed in one way or another, agreeable to right reaſon and the diſtates of religion.

ſtorms; (*j*) beſides, we may ſet ourſelves more ſeriouſly to the meditation of death and judgment, when we are come within ken of them, and ſhall be apt to examine the intrinſic good and evil of things with more impartiality, when the heat of youth and the boiling of our paſſions are cooled and ſlaked: And, finally, this is a ſeaſonable time to correct and repair the errors of the paſt life, and to ſtate our accounts for the laſt ſolemn audit. (*k*)

But though I thus prefer age, as moſt fit for a retired life, I do not diſſuade the younger from it, provided it be *virtue*, not ſoftneſs, the love of *another* world, not a cowardly declining the duties of *this*, which prompt them to it; otherwiſe, it were ſure much better that the younger part of mankind, through the vigorous ſeaſon of life, ſhould be engaged and taken up by buſineſs; (*l*) nay, ſhould contend even with the cares, troubles, and difficulties of the world, rather than make choice of retirement to be the ſcene of a voluptuous, lazy, and unprofitable life; for, in the one caſe, ſomething is every

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(*j*) O ſacred Solitude, divine retreat!
Choice of the prudent, envy of the great;
Here free from ways of men, laid ſafe aſhore,
We ſmile to hear the diſtant billows roar;
Here bleſt with health, with buſineſs unperplext,
This life we reliſh, and inſure the next.

DR. YOUNG.

(*k*) The ſcriptures inform us, that after death there is a judgment, Hebrews 9: 27. Therefore in all our actions we ſhould have reſpect to that account, which we muſt all inevitably give at laſt to God the great judge of all.

(*l*) Youth is the time for action, not for reſt from the buſineſs of life; becauſe all the powers of the body, every faculty of the mind and every affection of the ſoul are then moſt lively, active and vigorous.

every day learnt, and ſomething done, but in the other, nothing; in the one, the man lives neither diſhonourable to himſelf, nor unuſeful to his country; but, in the other, he rots and conſumes away inglorioufly and unprofitably. (*m*)

Secondly, As to place. Solitude has ever been deemed a friend to meditation, and a retirement from the world very ſerviceable to a converſation with Heaven: and this opinion is much ſtrengthened by the practice of the Nazarites, prophets and devout perſons in the beſt times. 'Tis remarked of Iſaac, (*n*) that when he would meditate, he went out into the field; and when Moſes met God, it was in the deſart. (*o*) Without queſtion, a private retreat affords us many conveniencies and advantages reſpecting a contemplative life; leiſure and ſilence ſettle and compoſe the thoughts, and the mind augments its ſtrength and vigour by reſt, complacency and collection within itſelf; and in this ſtate of ſerenity the ſoul is moſt fit to reflect upon its own nature, or enter into a ſurvey of the reſt and peace of glorified ſpirits, and examine the ground of its own hopes. (*p*)

By

(*m*) There are three ſorts of ſolitude, 1. A ſolitude of beaſts, which reſpecting man is ſhameful and wholly to be condemned, 2. A ſolitude of philoſophers, which is to be much ſuſpected. 3. A ſolitude of Chriſtians, which is the only ſolitude worth commending; the firſt is too low and groveling, the ſecond too ſpeculative and abſtracted, the third alone is ſuitable to the nature and faculties of man.

(*n*) Geneſis 24: 63.

(*o*) Exodus 19: 2, 3.

(*p*) A country life is moſt proper for recollection and contemplation; we ſee continually in rural ſcenes a thouſand wonderful objects to excite our admiration and raiſe our thoughts from Earth to Heaven; not but that the real Chriſtian (whether in town or country) may enjoy ſweet communion with God in private, and be ſpiritually minded; though moſt likely to be ſo in rural quiet and tranquility.

By retirement, we, at leaſt in a great meaſure, free and diſengage ourſelves from thoſe things which are apt either to ſoften or diſturb us, and to breed in us either vanity or vexation; and I cannot tell, but the fineneſs of air, the openneſs of proſpect, the regularity and moderation of diet, reſt and exerciſe, may have that influence upon our bodies, as to diſpoſe and prepare them to be the fitter inſtruments of the mind. To all this we may add, that the variety, beauty and uſe of all the works of nature do, inſenſibly and almoſt unawares, raiſe in us an admiration of the divine wiſdom, and invite us to adore his power, and love him for his goodneſs. (*q*)

But, notwithſtanding all this, it muſt ever be remembered, that retirement does not ſo much conſiſt in ſolitude of places, as in freedom from ſecular buſineſs and troubles, from the allurements, diſtractions and vexations of the world; if we put theſe off, we may find retirement enough in the moſt populous city; but, if we carry theſe with us into the country, we ſhall reap little benefit from change of place; and, under the name of retirement, we ſhall be perſecuted with all the evils and miſchiefs with which vanity, diſorder and diſtraction are wont to diſquiet an active and buſy life. (*r*) This being rightly underſtood, the nature

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(*q*) Where'er I caſt my wand'ring eyes around,
The God I ſeek, in every object's found:
Purſuing Thee, the verdant fields I paſs,
And read thy name in every blade of graſs;
Beauty compleat and majeſty divine,
In all thy works, Ador'd Creator! ſhine.

MRS. ROWE.

(*r*) The mind, temper, diſpoſition and qualifications of a perſon, who wiſhes to retire into the country, ſhould be conſulted, and be all agreeable, as well as mutually conſpire to render ſolitude both pleaſing and profitable.

ture of our circumſtances ought to govern us in chooſing the place of our retreat, but eſpecially a regard to ſuch duties, wherein we propoſe to ſpend the bigger portion of our time.

Thirdly, The exerciſe and employment of a contemplative life is now to be conſidered: and here theſe ſeveral things offer themſelves immediately to my thoughts, *Buſineſs*, *Diverſion*, *Friendſhip* and *Meditation*, as comprizing all the ſeveral acts of a contemplative life, and meaſuring out the ſeveral periods of the Aſcetick's time. (*f*)

Firſt, Of Buſineſs. I have before ſaid, that a life of mere contemplation is above the nature and ſtate of man; (*t*) and, when I conſider how few are capable of any long or regular contemplations, I am apt to think, that the wiſeſt way for moſt is, not to diſcharge and free themſelves from *all* temporal engagements, but only from ſuch as will diſturb the peace and order of a retired life; and yet I could wiſh, that their growth and improvement in knowledge and goodneſs might be their main buſineſs and employment. So many indeed are our errors and ſins, ſo frail, tender and weak our virtue, that to correct the one, and confirm the other, is buſineſs enough, and may, of itſelf, eaſily take up the whole of life.

If we purſue diligently all the methods of the improvement and advancement of life, we ſhall need

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(*f*) In ſtill retreats the hermit ſpends his days,
In heav'nly contemplation, prayer and praiſe;
Oh may the country be my calm abode,
To ſtudy nature and converſe with God.
RURAL CHRISTIAN.

(*t*) Man was not created and ſent into this world merely to contemplate but glorify his Maker; this being his chief end, ſhould be his daily ſtudy and principal endeavour. 1. Corinthians 10: 31.

need no other arts or employment to ſpend or divert our time; he that, beſides a conſtant attendance upon public devotion, ſacraments and ſermons, beſtows ſome time each day on bewailing his ſins, and bleſſing God for his mercies; (*u*) on examining his preſent ſtate, and eſtabliſhing his future hopes; he that ſpends each day but a few thoughts on his Creator and Redeemer, on the vanity and uncertainty of all things in this world, but religion and virtue, or, finally, on death and judgment, and the various acts by which ſin and folly are wont to cheat or ſurprize him, to tempt or deceive him into ruin, will, I believe, find but few hours to waſte, (*v*) eſpecially when 'tis conſidered how much time the neceſſities of nature, and the indiſpenſable duties we owe to ſome relatives or other, take up.

This calls to my mind the vigilance and induſtry we owe to the happineſs of others, as well as to our own. (*w*) There are a great many offices of charity,

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(*u*) The ſtudy of nature, providence and grace, nouriſh piety and ſupport religion; but we are loſt in the noiſe and hurry of cities ere we are aware; there we are apt to be drawn away by the ſame trifles with which thoſe worldlings are taken up who never reflect on the nothingneſs of temporal things, or what is to be hoped or feared reſpecting a future and eternal ſtate beyond the grave.

(*v*) A real Chriſtian will always find enough to do, to watch his heart, guard his ſenſes, redeem his time, improve his talents and prepare for Heaven, while ſin, Satan and the world are oppoſing him on every ſide.

(*w*) Heav'n forming each on other to depend,
A maſter, or a ſervant, or a friend;
Bids each on other for aſſiſtance call,
Till one man's weakneſs grows the ſtrength of all;
Thus God and nature link'd the general frame,
And bade ſelf love and ſocial be the ſame.

POPE.

charity, to which humanity and our Chriſtian profeſſion do oblige us; the peace of the neighbourhood, the preſervation of the laws, the promoting public piety, the inſtruction of the ignorant, the protection of the injured, the relief of the needy, the comfort of the afflicted; theſe, and ſuch like occaſions will never be wanting, to rouze our zeal, and employ our charity; and theſe are works which will turn to as good, if not a better account in the life to come, than ſolitary virtue: (*x*) and, certainly; they turn to excellent account in this; for, when the retired man doth cultivate the neighbourhood, and ſow it with his charity, he ſeems but to plant and water his own garden, or plough and ſow his own fields, and, while he renders them more rich, gay and fertile, himſelf reaps the pleaſure and the profit, enjoys the proſpect, and feaſts on the fruit.

Juſt ſo it is in this piece of ſpiritual huſbandry; he who imparts wiſdom and inſtruction to another, purifies and exalts his own mind; he that ſcatters the expreſſions of his bounty and charity, feels his own ſoul warmed and delighted, and finds his virtue and his joy enlarged; (*y*) for 'tis with grace as 'tis with nature, the exerciſe of each breeds both ſtrength and pleaſure; to all which you may add, that no man conſults more effectually the intereſt and

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(*x*) Whatever ſtation of life we may be placed in, the direction of the Apoſtle Paul will be always ſeaſonable, "to do good and to "communicate forget not, for with ſuch ſacrifices God is well "pleaſed." Hebrews 13: 16.

(*y*) 'Tis better to give than to receive.

The firſt of human bleſſings is to bleſs,
And happieſt he, who feels another's woe.

COOPER.

and the pleaſure of his retirement, than he who moſt zealouſly ſtudies the ſupport and improvement of his neighbourhood. Here's buſineſs enough, and I could point out to you much more. (z)

But why ſhould I take pains to contrive and cut out work for the contemplative man? Peradventure I ſhould do him more ſervice, could I teach him to decline it. Alas! buſineſs will hunt and follow us; it will intrude and preſs upon us, whether we will or no; and ſuch is the natural vanity, ſuch is the curioſity of our minds, that we are too often apt to make ourſelves work, and to entangle ourſelves in a thouſand trifles and impertinencies: (a) I doubt, therefore, that it is here very needful to put thoſe I am diſcourſing with in mind, to take care that whilſt they ſhun the troubles and buſineſs of the world, they ſuffer not themſelves to be entangled in impertinencies of their *own* creating; that they mind and purſue the main end, that is, growth and increaſe in grace and virtue; and be at all times ready to ſacrifice trifles and matters of leſs moment to this their great intereſt, the one thing needful; leſt fancy and humour, or ſomething worſe, uſurp the place of reaſon, as it does

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(z) Learn hence, that a perſon retired from buſineſs, into the abodes of rural life, need never be idle, but may always find ſufficient employ as a man and a Chriſtian.

(a) All that amuſes mankind in the general, are but dreams of happineſs, empty ſhades, and fantaſtic appearances; what compenſation can they make for an infinite good departed?

MRS. ROWE.

Alas! how many thouſands in the world are there, who are buſy about nothing or worſe than nothing, ſeeking their own deſtruction in the purſuits of pleaſure, ſenſuality and diſſipation!

does too often happen, in a life of abſolute and uncontroulable liberty. (*b*)

Secondly, Diverſion. This was not to be excluded from a ſolitary life. They adulterate religion, who make it ſour or melancholy; (*c*) it condemns nothing but what infects the purity, or breaks the force and vigour of the mind; we are not immortal and incorruptible beings; the ſoul and body both (for it were vain to contradict univerſal experience) ſink under the weight of conſtant labour; it will be hard, if not impoſſible, to preſerve the vigour of the mind, if we deſtroy the health of the body.

God, in another world, deſigns us ſpiritual bodies, as the moſt proper inſtruments of theſe active minds; (*d*) let us not, therefore, make them here crazy or ſickly. I would never have my religion be the effect of a broken and diſtempered body, but an enlightened and ſpiritual mind; I would never have it proceed from diſcontent againſt this world, but from the firm belief, love and admiration of a better beyond the grave. Whatever diverſion, therefore, recreates my mind, without enſnaring it; whatever amuſing exerciſe repairs my body, without impairing my virtue, I embrace with open arms.

I will

(*b*) Great care is neceſſary in ſolitude, to prevent evil thoughts intruding upon us unawares, and leading us to wiſh for opportunities of committing crimes of the deepeſt dye; let us ever remember

"Our thoughts are heard in Heaven."

NIGHT THOUGHTS.

(*c*) Dr. Watts very juſtly obſerves, "Religion never was de-"ſigned to make our pleaſures leſs."

(*d*) It is ſown a natural body, it is raiſed a ſpiritual body; as we have borne the image of the Earthy, we ſhall alſo bear the image of the Heavenly. I. Cor. 15, 44, 49.

I will not only taſte, but drink frequently, of rational and innocent pleaſures; if they exalt, and not debaſe my nature, I ſhall never complain that my mind is too chearful, or my body too vigorous. (*e*)

Let the prieſts of Baal cut themſelves with knives and lancets, I will keep my blood and ſpirits, if I can, to ſupport my zeal and enrich my fancy, and, in one word, to ſerve my God with life, while I enjoy it. Nobody can here miſtake me, unleſs they do it wilfully; and, if ſo, 'tis not worth the while to anticipate any wild objections.

I patronize not the *luſt*, but the *vigour* of the body; I invite not to the ſenſuality of a polluted fancy, but to the innocent recreation of a virtuous mind; (*f*) and, while I think not a dejected and diſcontented mind, and a decayed body, the moſt acceptable ſacrifice to God, I do by no means deny a penitent, contrite ſpirit, a purified and obſequious body to be ſo. (*g*)

Thirdly, As to Friendſhip. The diſtinction between acquaintance and friends is ever good, but never more proper and neceſſary than here; for retirement, as it ſignifies ſequeſtering ourſelves from company

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(*e*) We ſhould follow no diverſions whether in public or private life, but ſuch as Prudence over-rules, Virtue recommends, and Piety approves.

(*f*) Amuſements and recreations that tend to enervate the body, debauch the mind, or in the leaſt degree countenance vice and lead to ſenſuality, are fit only for the ſons and daughters of wantonneſs and proſtitution.

(*g*) The ſacrifices of God are a broken ſpirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God! thou wilt not deſpiſe. Pſalms 51: 17.

company, is to be underſtood with diſcretion, (*b*) and the plain rule here, as in all other caſes, is to avoid *extremes*; as a croud, ſo abſolute ſolitude ſeems not to miniſter either to the virtue or improvement of the mind, or to the peace and calm of life; the one robs us of our time, the other leaves us ſo much, that to many it becomes burdenſome; (*i*) the one makes us vain, trifling, or, it may be, worſe, ſenſual; the other dull and ſluggiſh, or, it may be, moroſe and ſavage.

The ſkill of a contemplative man is not to decline all company, but provide himſelf with good. The prophets themſelves had their colleges; and they in the firſt times, who left the cities for the deſart, did yet aſſociate themſelves with one another. Indeed, as I take it, in this kind of life we have the fulleſt enjoyment, and the beſt ſervice of our friends; the pureſt delight, and the trueſt edification, being beſt promoted in the contemplative life by friendſhip; (*j*) and, therefore, friendſhip is no more to

(*b*) A private man, who has a moderate income ſufficient to anſwer his occaſions, keeps company with ſome virtuous friends, whoſe tempers he likes, and enjoys the charms of ſociety in a kind of retirement and abſence from the buſy noiſy world, is in the faireſt way to be happy.

(*i*) Solitude relieves us when we are ſick of company; and converſation, when we are weary of being alone; as too long retirement weakens the mind, ſo too much company diſſipates it.

ST. EVREMOND.

(*j*) Dr. Young ſays in his Night Thoughts,

Haſt thou no friend to ſet thy mind abroach?
Good ſenſe will ſtagnate, thoughts ſhut up want air,
And ſpoil like bales unopen'd to the ſun.

The higheſt pleaſure of friendſhip, is a free communication of thoughts, deſigns and counſels.

be baniſhed from the gardens and retirements of the contemplative, than from the tables and enjoyments of the active.

Fourthly, Devotion, which includes prayer, praiſe and meditation; theſe are the remaining parts of the aſcetick life; and, indeed, theſe ought to be his great employment. (*k*) A life in the world may be a life of care and buſineſs, but a *retired* one ought more particularly to be a life of prayer, thoughtfulneſs and meditation; (*l*) nor, indeed, can it well be otherwiſe, unleſs we have propoſed to ourſelves ſome falſe ends of retirement; for theſe are not only the duties, but the pleaſures of the aſcetick life; in theſe, the ſoul is enlightened, enlarged, raiſed, and raviſhed; in theſe, it ſoars up to Heaven, and looks down with contempt upon earth; (*m*) in theſe, it poſſeſſes ſtability and ſecurity, peace and reſt, in the midſt of a frail, unſtable nature, and a reſtleſs and tumultuous world; in theſe, all the paſſions of the ſoul are exerciſed with a moſt tender ſenſible delight, ſorrow, fear, or reverence; hate and indignation do here expreſs themſelves to the height, not only without any diſorder or torture, but alſo with great contentment and ſatisfaction

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(*k*) Religion's all.

DR. YOUNG.

(*l*) Innocent amuſements and recreations for the body, may undoubtedly be prudently engaged in, in the intervals of retirement and meditation, ſo as to ſubſerve the improvement of the mind, and without injuring the devotion of the ſoul; ſuch as Fiſhing, Riding, Walking, Bowling, and the like.

(*m*) It has been well obſerved by many of the ſober and diſcerning part of mankind, that "a ſerious look at things temporal, looks them into nothing."

ſatisfaction of our nature; love, hope and joy reign here without either check, ſatiety or controul. (*n*)

But I forget that theſe ſubjects are ſo rich and inexhauſtible, they would engage me endleſsly; I forget they have been treated of by abler pens, ſo often and ſo excellently; I will therefore contract my ſails: and yet I think I have ſaid nothing of them, but as they have a particular aſpect upon the ſubject of this chapter, and I cannot paſs over meditation, without making ſome few reflections upon it. I know 'tis a worn-out ſubject with many, and, therefore, that I may the more eaſily find pardon, I will take care that this ſuperfluous impertinence, if it be one, ſhall be a very *ſhort* one. I will, therefore, take the liberty to crowd my thoughts, without attending to method altogether, leſt order and connection ſhould take up more paper and time than the things themſelves.

A *good* beginning is more than half the work, is a proverb no where truer than here; for meditation will be likely to end very unprofitably, if we enter not upon it in a good diſpoſition and devout frame; and if we do, it ſeldom ſucceeds ill. (*o*)

The ſoul, therefore, ought to be ſedate, calm, and unincumbered by any worldly concerns, pure and unſullied by any carnal images, filled with the

(*n*) What are ye now? ye glittering, vain delights,
That waſte our days, and rob us of our nights;
What your allurements? what your fancied joys?
Dreſs, equipage, and ſhow, and pomp, and noiſe?
Alas! how low, how taſteleſs and how mean,
To the calm pleaſures of this rural ſcene.

DODSLEY.

(*o*) In order to meditate to advantage in retirement, we muſt fix on ſuch ſubjects as are calculated to improve the mind, mend the heart, and enliven the devotion of the ſoul.

deſire of ſpiritual influence, and poſſeſſed with a ſuitable awe of the Divine Majeſty. (*p*)

Yet ſudden and extraordinary acts of meditation may be engrafted upon the ſtock of our natural paſſions, however firſt raiſed. Thus a troubled mind, betaking itſelf to reflect upon the vanity of the world, or upon the errors of life and corruption of human nature, may enlarge itſelf into a great many very fine, affecting and edifying thoughts, till the ſtorm diſſolve into a ſoft and fruitful ſhower. Thus the mind, a little gay with ſatisfaction or joy, will eaſily overflow into hallelujahs, if it enters into the meditation of the joys of Heaven, the love and grace of God, the triumphs of the reſurrection, &c. (*q*)

In all meditation, we ought to have more regard to edification than learning, to charity than knowledge, to devout paſſions than fancy or curioſity. Let none deſpiſe pious heats and tranſports, becauſe theſe ſhort paſſions, often repeated, will grow into habitual holineſs and ſteady devotion.

Thoſe arguments which we find moſt effectual to the repreſſing an inordinate affection, or to the cheriſhing a weak and pining virtue, are to be often ruminated on; (*r*) not only that they may be always ready,

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(*p*) Let Prudence admoniſh thee, Temperance reſtrain thee, Juſtice guide thy hand, Benevolence warm thine heart, and Gratitude to Heaven inſpire thee with devotion.

(*q*) We may meditate upon many ſubjects with pleaſure and profit too, but on none more ſo than the important truths of divine revelation.

(*r*) It is a pertinent obſervation of a late writer, Virtue can never be too highly eſteemed and admired, nor Vice too greatly contemned and abhorred.

ready, but alſo becauſe they are generally more ſucceſsful than others, which may yet be in themſelves of greater ſtrength and force.

The principles which do the great work of religion are few, clear and irreſiſtible; but a vaſt body of ſentences, notions, arguments, untried and undigeſted, are like the armour of Saul when put upon David, unmanageable and cumberſome. (*ſ*)

Diſputable or intricate points yield little or no nouriſhment; wit and fancy are alſo for ornament, not food.

Yet weak ſtomachs muſt be fed with eaſy and digeſtable diet; and this ſhould be made too as pleaſant and inviting as poſſible: God, in the works of nature, has mingled beauty with uſe, and pleaſure with profit: (*t*) Why ſhould we think this unlawful in the kingdom of grace? Variety, alſo, may be called in, to prevent languor and drowſineſs; nay, if the genius of the man be ſuch, that his mind is apt to be exalted, and as it were purified by them, I know not why notional and thin, or myſterious and deep ſpeculations ſhould be forbidden him; only in theſe, and ſuch like inſtances, two errors are to be avoided: *Firſt*, That we do not ſtudy more for delight and entertainment, than for edification and improvement in faith and virtue. (*u*)

(*ſ*) I. Samuel 17: 39.

(*t*) Creating Pow'r is all around expreſt,
The God diſcover'd, and his care confeſt;
Nature's high birth her Heav'nly beauties ſhow,
By every feature we the Parent know.
SIR R. BLACKMORE.

(*u*) Let rational entertainment and edification, like the utile dulci of the ancients,, mutually join to divert or improve your hours of ſolitude and retirement.

Secondly, That we do not obtrude our fancies as oracles, or our dreams as articles of faith upon the world. If I cannot indulge or abound in both, give me the luxury of love rather than that of fancy; and let me excel in humility and modeſty rather than in knowledge and mere notion.

St. Peter, in thoſe few words, *As new born babes deſire the ſincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby*, (*v*) ſeems to have excellently ſummed up the whole doctrine of religious contemplation, compriſing at once the matter, deſign and end of it, together with the frame and diſpoſition of mind qualifying us for it. (*w*)

Writing may ſerve to marſhal and preſerve our thoughts, and by this means we may be ſtocked with notions which may always be ready matter and argument for us to expatiate on; but we ought to take care, that firſt or laſt we are truly moved or affected by what we write, or elſe this will be rather an exerciſe of our invention than devotion; and all the products of it will be rather eſſays of wit and fancy, than of holy meditation; and we ſhall be rather apt to be pleaſed with our own parts, than improved by this practice.

They who are unable to ſtart proper matter for contemplation, or to carry it on regularly and coherently; and, conſequently, can reap but little fruit by this kind of exerciſe, may ſupply theſe defects

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(*v*) I. Peter, 2: 2.

(*w*) Growth in grace is the real Chriſtian's daily deſire, whilſt bible truths his ſoul is continually longing to feed upon, as the ſpiritual food of eternal life.

defects by *reading*, (*x*) and ſuch reflections and applications of it as are moſt eaſily and obviouſly made: (*y*) For example, Matt. 5: 1. *And ſeeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: And when he was ſet, his diſciples came unto him. And he opened his mouth and taught them ſaying*;---O bleſſed Jeſus! Thou art the true doctor and teacher, whoſe words are life and light, ſpirit and truth; I would leave the multitude, I would quit the pleaſures of the world, and, in the quality of a diſciple, take up my croſs and follow thee; (*z*) O do thou open thy mouth and ſpeak to me.

I deſire not to hear the voice of the world, (*a*) of the fleſh, or of the devil; ſpeak *thou* only to me, ſpeak *thou* to my heart and to my conſcience, and let me hear and feel *that* voice that ſpoke purity to the leprous, and life to the dead; (*b*) *Bleſſed is the poor in ſpirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.* (*c*)

(*x*) A friend, a book, the ſtealing hours ſecure,
And mark them down for wiſdom.
THOMPSON'S SEASONS.

(*y*) Reading and reflection are the baſis of true wiſdom.

(*z*) My wiſhes, hopes, my pleaſures and my love,
My thoughts and nobleſt paſſions are above.
MRS. ROWE.

(*a*) How dazzling is thy beauty! how divine!
How dim the luſtre of the world to thine!
IBID.

(*b*) I aſk not more than is lawful for mortality to wiſh; I aſk not the viſions of angels here below; nor the beatitudes of perfected ſpirits; I aſk but what thou haſt bidden me to ſeek, and given me hopes to obtain; I aſk that ſacred fellowſhip, that ineffable communion, with which thou favoureſt thy ſaints.
IBID.

(*c*) Matthew 5: 3.

The kingdom of Heaven! this is bleſſedneſs indeed! The kingdoms of the earth dazzle and aſtoniſh me, my fancy cannot comprehend, my ambition cannot aſpire after their grandeur and glory. Ah! what then muſt the kingdom of Heaven be!

But, O my Lord, am I of the number of theſe ſpiritually poor? If I am not, Lord! make me ſo; let me be never ſo contemptible in the eyes of the world, ſo I am but approved of and acceptable to thee; let me have no ambitious thoughts, but for thy favour and that crown of righteouſneſs which ſhall never fade away; (*d*) let me covet no riches, no honour, no power here; (*e*) if thy kingdom be but mine in reverſion, it is abundantly enough. Thus, without much (if any) difficulty, perſons of the loweſt talents, if they have any tincture of *religion* in them, may be eaſily ſupplied with variety of arguments, and with moſt devout and intereſting thoughts in ſolitude. (*f*)

The ſoul's ſoliloquy on a retired life.

O bleſſed! O voluptuous life! wherein, ſequeſtered from the world, I enjoy all that it has in it of pure,

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(*d*) II. Timothy 4: 8. and I. Peter 5: 4.

(*e*) If all the monarchs, whoſe command ſupreme,
Divides the wide dominion of this ball;
Should offer each his boaſted diadem,
I would not quit thy favour for them all;
Theſe trifles with contempt I would reſign,
The world is but a toy, whilſt I can call thee mine.
MRS. ROWE.

(*f*) . . . . . Oh quickly bear me hence,
To wholeſome ſolitude, the nurſe of ſenſe;
Where contemplation prunes her ruffled wings,
And the freed ſoul looks down to pity kings.
POPE.

pure, of true, of natural. Ah! That I could once break looſe from thoſe troubles and obligations that hang upon me, and enter into thy peace and tranquility! (*g*) I would plunge myſelf into all thy rational delights; I would loſe myſelf to this contemptible world, and, forgetting thoſe ſhadows and appearances and at beſt but faint and weak reflections of good, which flutter here about me, I would abandon myſelf entirely to the joys of the ſpirit, and the elevations of contemplation.

Let others enjoy honours, wealth, and power, let me enjoy myſelf, truth and God; let others enjoy the flatteries of ſenſe, and the cheats of fancy; give me the health of a ſprightly mind, the calmneſs and ſerenity of a ſilent retreat, with the pleaſure and ſecurity which the divine preſence ever brings along with it; let others finally depend on the gifts of fortune, me only on my *Creator*, for true happineſs, tranquility and ſubſtantial bliſs. (*b*)

(*g*) O far from cities my abode remove,
To realms of innocence, of peace and love.
M. BROWNE.

(*b*) See Lucas on a Contemplative life; from whence the above is principally extracted.

Books adapted for the improvement of the mind in uſeful knowledge and rational devotion in ſolitude:

The Bible.
Hervey's Meditations and Dialogues.
Dr. Young's Night Thoughts, Nature delineated, in 4 vols.
Thompſon's Seaſons, Lucas on Happineſs, The Religious Philoſopher, in 3 vols.
Browne's Sunday Thoughts, and his Eſſay on the Univerſe, Mrs. Rowe's Letters moral and entertaining.
Blackmore on Creation, and the Rural Chriſtian.

TRUE SOLITUDE, *or the Advantages of Retirement.* *A* FRAGMENT.

Solitude ſometimes is beſt ſociety.

MILTON.

. . . . . INVITED by the mild ſolemnity of the ſcene, and the agreeable company of two amiable friends, I agreed to take a tour round the country adjacent to the city of Bath, where I then reſided. It was about noon when we left that city, and having proceeded a few miles in our tour, we ſtruck off from the high road, and, after paſſing through various turnings and windings, we found ourſelves in the middle of a ſmall valley, bordered by the river Avon on one ſide, and by a gently riſing hill on the other. From the ſide of the hill ran a ſmall brook ſoftly bubbling through the valley over a pebbly bottom, to diſcharge itſelf into the neighbouring river; and, on the brow of the hill, we obſerved a ſmall tuft of trees, embracing in their boſom a low built cottage, almoſt buried from the eyes of mortals.

The ſituation of this ſolitary dwelling engaged our attention; and, accordingly, our curioſity was rouſed, to know what mortal had choſen a retreat ſo entirely ſequeſtered from the noiſe and buſtle of the world. We had not proceeded far, when we diſcovered, through an opening between the trunks of two large trees, a perſon ſitting in a contemplative poſture; his face was towards the ſetting ſun, and in his right hand he held a large ſcroll of paper.

paper. Before him, in a vaſt extent, the river rolled along its mazy current, from whoſe poliſhed ſurface ten thouſand glittering ſun-beams were reflected in trembling radiance. Every mountain's top was illuminated with golden rays, and the variety of colours, exhibited by the fading woods, defied the power of language to deſcribe the pleaſing ſcene; a herd of cattle, alſo, appeared in view, bending their courſe towards a little hut, which ſeemed to be their maſter's home, often ſtooping to crop the juicy herbage as they went along.

Approaching with the moſt profound ſilence, we had an opportunity of viewing the poſſeſſor of the lonely hermitage. He ſeemed to be advanced in years, and had ſomething truly majeſtic in his appearance. His eyes were quick and piercing, notwithſtanding an air of melancholy which had overſpread his countenance. Awed by the preſence of ſo venerable a perſon, we deemed it criminal to intrude upon that hallowed exerciſe in which he ſeemed employed. We accordingly ſtopped; while he, not ſuſpecting the approach of any human being, ſtarted from his ſeat, and in a fit of extacy exclaimed,

"O amiable nature! and thou, divine Solitude! how delightful are your ſcenes! how improving to the ſouls of mortals! What is man, vain man, when continually toſt in one feveriſh round of noiſe and company! His happineſs, at beſt, is deluſion, and fleeting as the miſt of the morning; but his miſery is great and permanent. A ſtranger to reflection, and deaf to the call of wiſdom, he is hurried headlong into every ſpecies of folly by his own diſtempered paſſions, and the moments of his exiſtence fleet away, unenjoyed and unimproved. But thou, ſacred ſolitude! doſt reſtore us to ourſelves:

thou teacheſt us to walk with the almighty Father of the univerſe, and live anew the envied patriarchal life. Thou leaveſt us time to be wiſe, and biddeſt us attend to the calls of our Maker; whoſe voice, reflected by every ſurrounding object, ſpeaks a language underſtood by the heart, though no human tongue can utter it.

"Yonder ſetting luminary, with what reſplendent majeſty he ſpreads abroad his rays! How many miriads have this day rejoiced in his enlivening beams! What a vaſt variety of plants and animals have felt his powerful energy: And now he departs for a while, to enlighten other regions, that light, and joy, and reſt, alternate, may perpetually ſucceed each other. But how infinitely more immenſe that Being! who not only made that ſun, but more than ten thouſand ſuch, which enlighten other ſyſtems, ſcattered in endleſs profuſſion through the unbounded fields of Æther! How immenſe muſt he be, who not only created them at firſt, in number, weight and meaſure, but upholds and feeds their eternal fires, from himſelf alone! And yet that Being looks down, through all thoſe ſuns, ſyſtems and worlds, with a father's eye upon *me*! O ſovereign wiſdom! thou univerſal good! receive, O receive the tribute of gratitude and praiſe from an unworthy mortal!"

Here the venerable rhapſodiſt made a pauſe, and ſtood in an attitude which no painter's fancy has ever yet been able to conceive; an attitude which ſhews human nature in its higheſt perfection. His arms were ſtretched out, as if ready to claſp all the creation in one glow of affection; his eyes were fixed on the heavens, as if drawn by ſome powerful attraction to the throne of the Moſt High; and the flush of triumph which overſpread his countenance

nance ſpoke the divine raptures of his heart---- raptures, which, though we cannot deſcribe, we muſt pronounce *them* truly happy that feel.

Having continued ſome time in this poſture, he was going to open the ſcroll which he held in his hand; but, turning his eyes about, and perceiving us, he recollected himſelf, and approached us with an air of ſweetneſs, which ſufficiently indicated the tranquility of his ſoul. He invited us to enter his ſecluded manſion, where, at our requeſt, he related the cauſe that had induced him to retire from the world, and enumerated the pleaſures and ſatisfaction he enjoyed in his ſolitary retirement.

"Pleaſure and pain, happineſs and miſery, joy and grief (ſaid the ſage) alternately ſucceed each other, and fill up the meaſure of human exiſtence. The proportion of each is indeed greatly in our own power; but happineſs without alloy is a ſtranger here. Providence, in compaſſion to the depraved paſſions of mankind, has daſhed with the gall of grief the dulcet cup of joy, leſt the human heart, intoxicated with pleaſure, ſhould forget the frailty of its nature, and ſuffer the moments to glide away unperceived and unregarded, without making the leaſt proviſion for happineſs hereafter.

"Nurſed in the lap of affluence, and lulled to repoſe on the downy couch of proſperity, my youth was ſpent in folly, and my manhood in diſſipation: one ſcene of vanity ſucceeded another, and my whole time was ſquandered away in a fruitleſs ſearch after happineſs and peace. Tired at laſt with ſeeking what experience had convinced me was impoſſible to be found, I determined to call in reflection to my aid, and to diſcover the real cauſe of theſe various diſappointments. I entered deep into myſelf, and endeavoured to trace the ſecret labyrinths

rinths of human reaſon and human expectations. As I advanced, the proſpect opened, and the objects that had been magnified by the miſts of vanity and folly reſumed their genuine appearance. I now ſaw they were deluſive as hypocritical ſanctity, unſtable as water, and fleeting as the colours on a morning cloud. I ſaw that pain and remorſe were the conſtant companions of vice and immorality; and that the gaudy covering, ſpread by the hand of expectation over the couch of debauchery, ſerved only to conceal the thorns of anguiſh and repentance.

" Struck with theſe diſcoveries, and ſtill deſirous of finding happineſs, though imperfect, I determined to bid adieu to the vices, the gaities, and the follies of life. I conſidered man as a rational being, capable of reflection, and capable of purſuing the dictates of his reaſon. I conſidered that happineſs is loſt, when paſſion is conſulted, and that the appearance of objects, reflected by the mirror of vanity, is falſe and deluſive. I ſaw that peace and tranquility muſt be ſought in ſolitude and retirement, and that the only path to happineſs muſt be lighted by the torch of wiſdom, and trodden by the feet of virtue.

" Such were my reflections, and ſuch my determination; I bade adieu to noiſy mirth, and left the fallacious enjoyments of midnight feſtivity to others; I choſe ſilence and reflection for my conſtant companions, confined my amuſements to the cultivation of the products of nature, and devoted the ſuperfluities of fortune, which had hitherto been thrown into the lap of folly, to relieve the wants of the needy, and wipe away the tears of affliction from the eyes of the indigent.

" This

" This ſolitary manſion ſuited my inclinations. I retired hither without conſulting my companions, or mentioning the place of my retreat to any except one boſom friend, who has kindly taken upon himſelf the management of my fortune, and of diſtributing my charities on worthy objects. By this means, the pleaſure is doubled; I have the ſatisfaction of knowing that the object is relieved, and relieved by a hand to him unknown.

" Can any ſatisfaction equal to this be found in the walks of ambition, folly and diſſipation? Aſk the libertine in the morning, when broken ſlumbers have, in ſome meaſure, reſtored his reaſon, what ſatisfaction of mind has ſucceeded his midnight intemperance?---Aſk the courtier, ſeated on the pinnacle of honour, what real happineſs reſults from the flattery of ſycophants, and the fallacious glare of tinſel grandeur? Can theſe empty ornaments atone for the innumerable cares that oppreſs, and the perpetual anxieties that rend his ſoul?---But here all is calm and ſerene; I riſe in the morning with the dawn, and join the chorus of nature in a hymn of praiſe to the Father of the Univerſe. (*i*) I contemplate the many objects that ſurround me with ſincere delight. I mark the daily progreſs of vegetation in the trees, the herbs, and the flowers; and acquire a glow of health from the pleaſing amuſement of cultivating my garden. The book of nature is diſplayed

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(*i*) Theſe are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty! thine this univerſal frame,
Thus wond'rous fair! thyſelf, how wond'rous then!

. . . . . ye in Heaven,
On earth, join all ye creatures, to extol
Him firſt, Him laſt, Him midſt, and without end.

MILTON.

diſplayed before me, and I peruſe the ample page with pleaſure and ſatisfaction.

"Thus"---added he---"my days are ſpent in tranquility, and my nights in unbroken ſlumbers. No fears alarm, no anxieties diſtreſs my ſoul. When the darkſome ſhades of night ſurround me, I can review the paſt tranſactions of the day without remorſe, and reflect on what the world calls pleaſure without repining. I conſider this ſtate of exiſtence as nothing more than a prelude to another; and hope to paſs through it in ſuch a manner, as not to forfeit the happineſs of the *future*, while I enjoy the *preſent*."

The appearance and converſation of this venerable Recluſe reminded me of the following elegant lines of our great poet, Shakeſpeare:

. . . . . He'll find the woods
More free from peril than the buſy world;
While this his life, (exempt from public haunt,)
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in ſtones, and good in every thing.

An ESSAY *on a Country Life.*

Calm are the pleaſures of a rural life. RURAL CHRISTIAN.

IN conſidering the country life, I ſhall be careful not to conſider it too minutely. I wiſh to give an agreeable notion of it to my readers, as well as to have an agreeable notion of it myſelf; and experience has taught me, that a microſcopic eye would make a man ſuffer continual diſguſt while beholding the phyſical world around him; ſo too prying a view of any ſyſtem of life produces a diſlike of it. Indeed I have remarked, that no exact detail of life from morning to night, however much the perſon who gave it was diſpoſed to repreſent it as pleaſing, had the effect to make one wiſh to realiſe it, and to "live o'er each ſcene;" on the contrary, that the effect of every ſuch detail has been to make one wonder how the daily taſk could be performed, and pity thoſe who played their ſeveral parts in the weariſome drama.

Happineſs may be conſidered as the honey of human life. It may be extracted from innumerable ſubſtances, and, provided it be pure and wholeſome, it matters not from whence it is derived. Happineſs in the country, therefore, as happineſs in town, is in a great meaſure the effect of induſtry, applied by each individual, in the way that he has found from his particular experience to be moſt beneficial.

I may be wrong. But I do confeſs, it appears to me at preſent, that a man cannot be happy in the country, whoſe mind is not tolerably ſedate, either naturally, or from having ſeen and enjoyed a great deal

deal, and exhauſted his curioſity and eager deſires. There is indeed in the country the variety of ſeaſons to contemplate; but the circling year moves too ſlowly for him whoſe blood bounds with rapidity, and he is apt to grow impatient and fretful. The ſame remark may be made as to moſt other modes of occupation or amuſement in the country, as means of happineſs. The ſports of the field, indeed, afford play to the higheſt degree of activity and animation; but they are but for ſhort periods, and are rather corporeal enjoyments than mental. Agriculture has much variety, but it is a ſober variety. All its operations are carried on deliberately; ſo that there is not that quick ſucceſſion of objects, without which a lively mind is uneaſy, and languiſhes. A man of vivacity, unleſs his views are kept ſteady, by a conſtant golden proſpect of gain, cannot long be pleaſed in looking at the operations of ploughing, dunging, harrowing, reaping, or threſhing. It is all very juſt what many ſagacious authors have written in praiſe of agriculture, and nobody will diſpute the pointed eulogium which Swift gives to him who makes two blades of graſs grow where there was only one before. The judgment will be unqueſtionably convinced; nay, for a moment the livelieſt of us may comply with *Thomſon*'s enthuſiaſtic exhortation.

"Ye generous Britons, venerate the plough."

But utility is not more univerſally the cauſe of pleaſure than wholeſomeneſs is; and a man will not prefer ploughing to a playhouſe, nor milk to champagne. Even if the occupations of agriculture could give lively minds pleaſure, we muſt conſider what dull intervals there are. When a field is completely ſown, and left to itſelf, we cannot actually

actually perceive the crop ſpringing. Even plantations, the rearing of which is by much the higheſt rural enjoyment, advance ſo imperceptibly; that a hypochondriac proprietor is ſick again and again with *ennui*, and is tempted with wild wiſhes to hang himſelf on one of his own trees, long before they are able to bear his weight.

Let not then a man of exuberant vivacity, keen ſenſations, and perpetual rage for variety, attempt to live in the country. If he does, it is more than probable he will be miſerable himſelf, and the ſcorn, perhaps the ſcourge of thoſe around him. Let the edge of his mind be blunted in the world, and his ſpirits be reduced to a temperate ſtate, before he ſettles in a ſituation, where the greateſt part of his time muſt paſs without vivid conſciouſneſs of any kind, and at beſt in uniform ſerenity.

If however a man be fit for living in the country by his natural diſpoſition, or by having gone through ſuch a courſe of fermentation in buſy and gay life, that turbulence is evaporated, and ſerenity is not inſipid to him, he may ſpend a very creditable and agreeable life. It is by no means neceſſary that every country gentleman ſhould be regular, ignorant, and ruſtic, like *Hypolitus*, in Dr. Young's Univerſal Paſſion. He may be a ſcholar, and devote ſeveral hours a day to books. He may entertain enough of the good breeding of a court. He may be an uſeful juſtice of the peace, and promote ſubordination, good morals, and religion, in his neighbourhood, and he may have the pleaſure of ſociety, if not with ſo high a zeſt as in cities, yet in a very ſatisfactory manner.

Faſtidious people, who have been long uſed to the gloſſy poliſh of elegant life, may be diſguſted with

with the plainneſs of thoſe with whom they muſt aſſociate in the country. But unleſs they are delicate to ſicklineſs, they will by degrees be habituated to a more homely ſtyle, and by exerting themſelves with complacent attention, they may in time diffuſe gentility even amongſt their ruſtic neighbours.

O let me in the country range;
'Tis there we breathe, 'tis there we live;
The beauteous ſcene of aged mountains,
Smiling vallies, murm'ring fountains,
Lambs in flowery paſtures bleating,
Echo our complaints repeating,
Bees with humming ſounds delighting,
Groves to gentle ſleep inviting,
Birds in chearful notes expreſſing,
Nature's bounty and their bleſſing,
Theſe afford a laſting pleaſure,
Without guilt and without meaſure.

BROWN.

RELIGIOUS RETIREMENT *enforced on all.*

Retire, and read thy Bible to be gay.

NIGHT THOUGHTS.

EVERY man, endued with rational faculties, was certainly deſigned by the Sovereign Creator to fill up ſome ſtation, and to diſcharge ſome duties in life. It is incumbent upon every one to act agreeable to this opinion; and, in whatever rank he is ſtationed, honourably to fulfil the obligations of his place; but as man owes a duty ſuperior to all merely worldly reſpects, to himſelf and his eternal intereſts, there can be no doubt, but a reaſonable retirement upon all proper occaſions is indiſpenſably requiſite, and eſpecially towards the cloſe of life; when a man has done his buſineſs, if I may ſo ſay, there is no reaſon why he ſhould not be diſmiſſed from the public ſtage, for the better ordering his private and moſt important concerns.

When a man retires with this view, and dedicates the remains of exiſtence to the retroſpect of paſt life; to the ſerious review of former tranſactions; to the ſervice of God, in rational piety, the improvement of his mind, and the preparation of his ſoul for that tremendous futurity, which, alarming thought! is eternal: When theſe purpoſes, and theſe reſolutions, lead any one from the hurry and tumult of the world, to the calm and quiet ſcenes of privacy and contemplation, we heſitate not to pronounce ſuch a retirement as honourable as it is uſeful, ſubſervient to the beſt intereſts of rational creatures, and productive of the happieſt conſequences.

When

When a man, conſcious of his dependent ſtate and future expectancies, awakened to a ſerious regard for immortal concerns, and convinced that the hurry of the world, and the tumult of unwearied application to earthly attachments, much indiſpoſe the mind from proper attention to divine conſiderations; when moved by ſuch reflections, a perſon reſolves to quit the public ſtage, and to retire, that he may gain a better knowledge of *himſelf*, his *God* and his *duty*; the reſolution is as noble, as the performance of it will be happy;* and every thing, that can dignify human nature, riſes up at once, to adviſe and applaud it.

The VISITOR.

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* Before a man reſolves upon a retired life, he ſhould firſt examine the duties, difficulties and dangers which attend it; and ſee whether he is properly furniſhed to perform the one, and ſuitably prepared to encounter the other; leſt he makes himſelf appear ridiculous in the view of his neighbours, or fooliſh and imprudent in his own.

MORNING REFLECTIONS *in* SEPTEMBER.

Grey twilight uſhers in the bluſhing morn,
Celeſtial tints the eaſtern ſkies adorn;
Bight Phœbus riſing as the God of day,
Fogs, miſts, and vapours quickly drives away.

REASON now reſumes her throne: again ſhe enlightens the mind, as the radiant ſun illumines the fruitful earth. The ſilent world, which has long been immers'd in the arms of ſleep, begins to ſhake off its ſlumbers, and ſalute the infant day. Lively repreſentation of that awful morn, when we ſhall awake from the death of ſleep, and repoſe no more!---When that long immortal day ſhall open upon us which will never give place to night, nor ſuffer us to cloſe our eyes again!

Oh my ſoul, contemplate with advantage that important time! bring the ſcene to thy view; place it before thee; weigh, impartially weigh, its greatneſs, its awfulneſs, its moment; and let it ſo influence thy future conduct---let it make ſo deep, ſo laſting an impreſſion, as will enable thee hereafter, when thou art ſummoned to appear, to meet it with reſignation, with confidence and joy.---Think and be ſerious; however unconcerned thou may'ſt be at preſent, know for certain that the period, the alarming period, will arrive, when thou muſt take a long farewel of every thing here below, and enter the regions of the everlaſting world.

How pleaſant and ſalubrious is this prime of day! the freſhneſs of the air, the coolneſs of the fanning zephyrs, the muſic of the aerial inhabitants, the fragrancy

grancy of the opening flowers, the beautiful proſpects which open on every ſide, adorned with the gilded glories of the riſing ſun, and rendered ſtill more charming by their late ſuſpenſion, fill the mind with ſuch new and exalted pleaſure as is paſt deſcribing. Milton, in Paradiſe Loſt, makes Adam ſpeak the beauties of the morn very finely in the following lines:

Sweet is the breath of morn, her riſing ſweet,
With charm of earlieſt buds; pleaſant the ſun,
When firſt on this delightful land he ſpreads
His orient beams on herb, tree, fruit and flower,
Glittering with dew. . . . . .

In another place Adam is introduced as reproaching Eve for ſleeping too long, and loſing the advantages of the opening day, and in raptures he thus addreſſes her:

. . . . . Awake,
My faireſt, my eſpous'd, my lateſt found,
Heaven's laſt beſt gift, my ever new delight,
Awake; the morning ſhines, and the freſh field
Calls us; we loſe the prime, to mark how ſpring
Our tender plants, how blows the citron grove,
What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed,
How nature paints her colours, how the bee
Sits on the bloom extracting liquid ſweets.

Before the noiſy world is awake, let me take a gentle walk along the ſide of this hanging hill, whoſe loſty ſummit is crowned with ſtraggling buſhes and venerable oaks. Here I may enjoy, without interruption, the full ſalubrity of the atmoſphere; and while I rove along, ſatiate my eye with the beauties of the country, ſerenaded at the ſame time with the delightful muſic of yonder ſprightly warblers, who ſeem, as they are perched in the thickets above, tuning their throats in another region. At this agreeable

agreeable diſtance the melody is not leſs pleaſing: it is indeed more ſoft and more ſoothing, and ſeems to lull the mind into a ſtate of eaſy tranquility, eſpecially when the dying ſtrains are waſted on the downy wings of Zephyrus, and ſcarcely ſtrike the expanded ear.

But where are thy lonely notes, tuneful Philomel? where thy bold voice and warbling tone, thou chief among the feathered muſicians? ſhall the cheerful ſummer no more hear thy melting lay, nor the woods and groves liſten longer to thy ſweetly ſoothing ſong? Haſt thou, ah lively bird! already left thy haunts?---already bid adieu, to our country, and left the verdant mead, in whoſe thick fence thou long haſt ſat and ſung! Yes, Philomel's no more.---Warned of approaching winter, ſhe's gone with her offspring to other climes, and purpoſes to ſtay there a few months, till inſtinct, unerring inſtinct, informs her ſhe may venture back again with ſafety.

Not ſo with man! When he takes his journey into the regions of immortality, and leaves behind his family and friends, the returning ſpring calls him back no more. When the ſtated ſeaſon of his continuance in this lower clime is expired, and death calls him to wing his long and arduous way to a new and unknown world, he never migrates back again, nor viſits his native haunts, but fixes his dwelling there, through revolving ſeaſons, and rolling years, till time ſhall be no more---nay, even *for ever*.

The little inſects which in myriads now ſport in the air, and buzz about my ears, may be ſurveyed by a contemplative man with improvement. See how they expand their ſilken wings, with what agility they ſkim the aerial fluid, and exult in the

ſunny ray. Unmindful of future, the preſent moment is all their boaſt: regardleſs of what is to come, they live only for to-day, nor ever think of to-morrow: they ſee not the gloomy ſeaſon which is advancing with ſwifteſt ſpeed to put an end to their tranſient exiſtence, and ſweep them from the face of ſummer. And is it not thus with the majority of the human race, who, quite immerſed in ſenſual pleaſures, and ſolely captivated with the gilded ſcene before their eyes; who entirely occupied with the preſent, and unconcerned for the future, paſs gaily along in a continued round of pleaſure, unconſcious, or at leaſt unmindful of the mutability of mundane enjoyments, till diſappointed, unawares they ſink, and are ſeen no more? . . . . . .

Such is vain life, an idle flight of days,
A ſtill deluſive ſound of fickly joys,
A ſcene of little cares and trifling paſſions,
If not ennobled by the deeds of virtue.

Every thing reads a lecture to man concerning the ſhort duration of this mortal life. The verdure of the plains and fields, the plants and herbs, the foliage of the trees, the ſinging of birds, &c. &c. which recreate us for a while, and then paſs away, is a leſſon for us, and ſhews us as in a mirror the contracted ſpan of life, and the momentary condition of our preſent exiſtence.---Even the radiant colours which but now ſtreaked the ſky, and tinged "the fleeces of the firmament," * exhibited a picture of the preſent world; its fading acquiſitions and fantaſtic joys, which diſappear with our exiſtence, were pourtrayed in a moſt lively manner, in the tranſitory

* See Hervey's Meditations on Night.

tranſitory ſcene.---And are we ſo frail? is our preſent ſtate ſo uncertain and precarious? do we ſtand with the world behind us, and eternity full in our view, unconſcious of the time we ſhall quit the one, and the moment we ſhall enter the other?---Unparalleled folly! matchleſs ſtupidity! if we do not prepare for this laſt and awful tranſition; if we are unſolicitous about a matter of ſuch infinite importance.---Oh! my ſoul, think in time, and be wiſe---beware, and be happy!

At the foot of this hill what a glorious proſpect the eye takes in! ſuch variegated rural views, ſuch ſtriking landſcapes and picturesque ſcenes, ſeem happily calculated to recreate the fancy, and lull to reſt the turbulent paſſions of the mind. What are all the works of man, all the productions of art, compared to theſe inimitable, theſe grand and magnificent views of nature? *---How great then, how good muſt He be, who made this vaſt ſyſtem, who hung this ponderous ball on nothing, who ſpread out the heavens like a curtain, gave the ſun to ſhine, and rolled the planetary worlds from his all creating hand!

Amaz'd the wonders of thy God behold!
And meditate his mercies manifold.

Every part of the creation is pregnant with inſtruction, and all join in ſweetly expreſſive ſilence to adore and magnify their great Creator.

* The famous Cicero, who lived amongſt all the pomp of Rome, uſed to ſay, that all the grandeur of courtly buildings were not to be compared to the proſpect of the country. When we enter (ſaith he) into magnificent palaces, we are at firſt ſtruck with the gilded

The ſun that walks his airy way,
To light the world and give the day,
The moon that ſhines with borrow'd light,
The ſtars that gild the gloomy night,
The ſeas that roll unnumber'd waves,
The woods that ſpread their verdant leaves,
The field whoſe clods conceal the grain,
The yellow treaſures of the plain;
Theſe ſpeak their Maker as they can, *
But want and aſk the tongue of man.

PARNEL.

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gilded roofs, the marble columns, the coſtly pavements and all the other decorations of art; but when we have beheld them often, we are no longer charmed with them; whereas the proſpect of the country never ſatiates us. It is as it were every moment new: look as long as we pleaſe, ſome new object, ſome different ſhade of light affords a freſh pleaſure.

The fields cloathed in pleaſant green, the limpid ſtreams gliding through them, the overhanging hills, the waving corn, the bleating flocks, the lowing herds, the magnificent ſpaciouſneſs around us, all contribute to our pleaſure, and are every day putting on ſome freſh form to entertain us.

* Soft roll your incenſe, herbs, and fruits, and flowers,
In mingled clouds to HIM, whoſe ſun exalts,
Whoſe breath perfumes you, and whoſe pencil paints.
Ye foreſts bend, ye harveſts wave to HIM.

THOMSON.

The Benefits and Advantages of Retirement.

O Solitude! bleſt ſtate of life below,
Source of our joy and balm of every woe. MOSES BROWN.

SOLITUDE has ever been deemed a friend to meditation; and a retirement from the world very ſerviceable to a converſation with Heaven: And this opinion is much ſtrengthened by the practice of the Nazarites, Prophets, and devout perſons in the beſt times. 'Tis remarked of Iſaac, that when he would meditate, he went out into the field; * and when Moſes met God, it was in the deſart.

Without queſtion, a private retreat affords many conveniencies and advantages to a contemplative life; leiſure and ſilence ſettle and compoſe the thoughts, and the mind augments its ſtrength and vigour by reſt, complacency, and collection within itſelf; and in this ſtate of ſerenity it is moſt fit to reflect upon itſelf, or enter into a ſurvey of the reſt and peace of glorified ſpirits, and examine the grounds of its own hopes. By *retirement* we at leaſt in a great meaſure, free and diſengage ourſelves from thoſe things which are apt either to ſoften or diſturb us, and to breed in us vanity or vexation. And I cannot tell but the fineneſs of air, the openneſs of proſpect, the regu-

* Geneſis 24: 63.

larity and moderation of diet, reſt, and exerciſe, may have that influence upon our bodies, as to diſpoſe and prepare them to be the fitter inſtruments of the mind; to this we may add, that the variety, beauty, and uſe of all the works of nature, do inſenſibly and almoſt unawares raiſe in us an admiration of the divine wiſdom, and invite us to adore his power and goodneſs. * But let it ever be remembered, that retirement does not ſo much conſiſt in *ſolitude* of *place*, as in freedom from ſecular buſineſs and troubles, and from the allurements, diſtractions, and vexations of a buſy and enſnaring world. †

LUCAS on HAPPINESS.

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* Earth's verdant ſcenes, and yon cerulean ſkies,
Employ my wand'ring thoughts and feaſt mine eyes;
Nature in every object points the road,
Whence contemplation wings my ſoul to God;
He's all in all; his wiſdom, goodneſs, power,
Spring in each blade of graſs and blooming flower,
Smile o'er the meads and bend in every hill,
Glide in the ſtream and murmur in the rill;
All nature moves obedient to his will.
Heav'n ſhakes, earth trembles and the foreſts nod,
While awful thunders ſpeak the voice of God.

† O! loſt to virtue, loſt to manly thought,
Loſt to the noble ſallies of the ſoul,
Who think it ſolitude to be alone.
Communion ſweet! communion large and high!
Our reaſon, guardian angel, and our God!
Then neareſt theſe, when others moſt remote.

NIGHT THOUGHTS.

Miſcellaneous Extracts from celebrated Writers, in Favour of Solitude and Retirement.

TRUE happineſs is of a *retired* nature, and an enemy to pomp and noiſe; it ariſes in the firſt place from the enjoyment of oneſelf, and in the next, from the friendſhip and converſation of men of ſenſe, candour, experience and diſcernment.

While the inhabitants of populous cities are eagerly purſuing riches, honours, and tumultuous pleaſures, ſurrounded with noiſe, nonſenſe and diſſipation; in the peaceful abodes of rural life, calm felicity and undiſturbed tranquillity are enjoyed, far from the hurry of buſineſs, toils of merchandize, or anxieties of gain.

The man that lives retired, lives quiet; he fears nobody, of whom nobody is afraid; he that ſtands below upon the firm ground, need not fear falling.

Sir Francis Walſingham, towards the end of his life, grew very melancholy, and writ to Lord Burleigh to this purpoſe, we have lived long enough to our *country*, to our *fortunes*, and to our *King*, it is high time we begin to live to *ourſelves*, and to our *God*.

Retirement is the trueſt enjoyment.

The Pleaſures beſt enjoyed in Retirement.

Happy the man! who ſtudying nature's laws,
Thro' known effects can trace their ſecret cauſe. DRYDEN.

IT is ſurely at a diſtance from great towns, and in retirement, that the greateſt happineſs is to be found. The honeſt ſimplicity of the country people is far more agreeable than the pert and affected manners of the town. The beauties of nature untouched by art, an air ſweet as it blows over the bloſſomed vale, peaceful hours, ſocial chearfulneſs, and domeſtic joys; theſe are the ſoft rewards of retirement.

It is alſo in the country that intellectual enjoyments are the ſtrongeſt: for here are neither diſſipations nor interruption. An ingenious writer has traced very elegantly the pleaſures of reflection; and if theſe are in general delightful, how much muſt they be improved amidſt the peaceful ſerenity of the country!

The author to whom I allude obſerves, that the enjoyments of the underſtanding exceed very far the pleaſures of ſenſe. But by theſe pleaſures are generally underſtood ſublime contemplations on ſubjects of ſcience, and abſtruſe diſquiſitions; contemplations which can only be the reſult of uncommon powers, and extraordinary efforts.

But there are intellectual pleaſures of another kind; to the enjoyment of which, neither great abilities nor much learning are required. Theſe are no other than the pleaſures of reflection, which are open

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to the illiterate mechanic as well as to the ſage philoſopher, and conſtitute ſome of the ſweeteſt ſatisfactions of human life.

There are few who have not felt pleaſing ſenſations ariſing from a retroſpective view of the firſt periods of their lives. To recollect the puerile amuſements, the petty anxieties, and the eager purſuits of childhood, is a taſk in which all delight. It is common to obſerve, that on no ſubject do men dwell with ſuch pleaſure, as the boyiſh tricks and wanton pranks which they practiſed when at ſchool. The hoary head looks back with a ſmile of complacency, mixed with regret, on the ſeaſon when health glowed on the cheek, when lively ſpirits warmed the heart, and when toil ſtrung the nerves with vigour.

Reflection is the propereſt employment, and the nobleſt ſatisfaction in every ſeaſon of life: but in old age it is uncommonly delightful. Deſtitute of ſtrength and vigour neceſſary for bodily exertions, and furniſhed with obſervation by experience, the old man finds his greateſt pleaſure to conſiſt in wandering in imagination over paſt ſcenes of delight, in recounting the adventures of his youth, the viciſſitudes of human life, and the public events of which he is proud to have been a witneſs. Of ſo exalted a nature are thoſe enjoyments, that divines have not heſitated to aſſert, that to recollect a well-ſpent life is to anticipate the bliſs of a future exiſtence.

The profeſſors of philoſophy, who will be acknowledged to have underſtood the nature of true and ſubſtantial pleaſure better than the buſy, the gay, and the diſſipated, have ever ſhewn a predilection for privacy and ſolitude. No other cauſe have they aſſigned for their conduct in forſaking

ſociety, than that the noiſe and hurry of the world is incompatible with the exertion of calm reaſon and diſpaſſionate reflection. The apothegm of that ancient, who ſaid, "he was never leſs alone, than when by himſelf," is not to be conſidered merely as an epigrammatic turn. Philoſophy is only to be courted in the ſequeſtered ſhades of ſolitude and retirement.

Were the powers of reflection cultivated by habit, mankind would at all times be able to derive a pleaſure from their own breaſts, as rational as it is exalted. To the attainment of this happineſs a ſtrict adherence to the rules of *virtue* is neceſſary; for let it ever be remembered, that none can feel the pleaſures of reflection, who do not enjoy the inward peace of innocence and virtue.

To be good is to be happy . . . . . .
What nothing earthly gives, or can deſtroy,
The ſoul's calm ſunſhine and the heart-felt joy,
Is Virtue's prize. . . . . POPE.

The Pleaſures of Rural Converſation.

A friend, a book, the ſtealing hours ſecure.

THOMSON.

PERHAPS it is in the country chiefly, that the ſexes beſt enjoy the pleaſures of converſation and of virtuous intercourſe. Rural ſcenes convey a ſupreme delight to ſenſible minds. The verdure of the fields, the luxury of extenſive and cultivated plains, the glory of lofty trees, the ſinging of birds, the ſportings of animals, and the air of innocence which nature every where ſpreads over her works, all contribute to ſuggeſt emotions of felicity and happineſs. The character muſt be profligate indeed, that can find no charms in the enjoyments of the country. Epicurus, who with all his defects, had ſome notion of true taſte for pleaſure, fixed the ſeat of his enjoyment in a garden. To uſe the language of an agreeable writer, he thought a tranquil ſpot, furniſhed with the united ſweets of art and nature, the beſt adapted to delicate repoſe. And even the ſeverer philoſophers of antiquity were wont to diſcourſe in the ſhade of a ſpreading tree in ſome cultivated plantation. From the ſnow drop to the moſs roſe, the flower-garden diſplays an infinite variety. Did nature bring forth the tulip and the lily, the roſe and the honeyſuckle to be neglected or deſpiſed? It is from rural ſcenes that the poets frame their ideas of elyſium.

The happineſs of two virtuous perſons, enjoying the pleaſures of the country, and each other's con-

verſation, is truly delightful, and an emblem of paradiſick bliſs. Nor can any contract be formed that is ſo violent, as the common enjoyments of the town and the country. To thoſe who are in love with the purſuits of this world, the contemplations of the country are an irkſome burden. The author who has been juſt alluded to has deſcribed this peculiarity. According to him, the odour of flowers, the purling of ſtreams, the ſong and plumage of birds, the ſportive innocence of the lamb, the fidelity of the dog, are incapable of attracting for one moment the notice of him whoſe conſcience is uneaſy, and whoſe paſſions are unſubdued.

Invite him to a morning walk through a neighbouring wood, and he begs to be excuſed; for he loves his pillow, and can ſee no charms in trees. Endeavour to allure him in a ſummer's evening, when after a ſhower every leaf breathes fragrance and freſhneſs, to ſaunter with you in the garden, and he pleads an engagement at whiſt, or at the bottle. Bid him liſten to the thruſh, the blackbird, the nightingale, the woodlark, and he interrupts you by aſking the price of ſtocks, and enquiring whether the Weſt India fleet is arrived. As you walk over the meadows enamelled with cowſlips and daiſies, he takes no other notice, but enquires who is the owner how much the land lets for an acre, and what hay ſold for at the laſt market. He prefers the gloomieſt day of November on which pecuniary buſineſs is tranſacted, or a feaſt celebrated, or a public diverſion attended, to all the delights of the merry month of May.

He who is conſtantly engaged in gratifying his luſts or in gaming, becomes in a ſhort time ſo very wiſe, as to conſider the ſtudy of the works of God

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in the creation, and the external beauty both of vegetable and animal nature, as little ſuperior to a childiſh entertainment. * How grave his aſpect! No Solon ever looked ſo ſapient as he does, when he is on the point of making a bet, or inſidiouſly plotting an intrigue. One might conclude from his air of importance, that man was born only to ſhake the dice, to ſhuffle cards, to drink claret, or to deſtroy by debauchery the innocence of individuals, and the peace of families. Ignorant, thoughtleſs, and miſtaken wretch! He conſiders not, that purity of mind and ſimplicity of heart would furniſh him with delights, which while they render his life tranquil and happy, would enable him to reſign his ſoul at death into the hands of his Maker, with Chriſtian reſignation, and to adopt the language of expiring Stephen, *Lord Jeſus receive*, or *into thy hands, O Lord, I commit my ſpirit.* †

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* On different ſenſes different objects ſtrike,
All ſpread their charms, but charm not all alike Pope.

As many perſons in the country are fond of extenſive gardens and pleaſure-grounds, the following directions for laying them out, may not be unacceptable.

Rules for laying out a Pleaſure-Garden.

IN a garden for *pleaſure*, the principal things to be conſidered are,

1. The ſituation.
2. The ſoil, aſpect, or expoſure.
3. Water.
4. Proſpect.

1ſt. The ſituation ought to be ſuch a one as is wholeſome, in a place that is neither too high, nor too low; for, if a garden be too high, it will be expoſed to the winds, which are very prejudicial to trees; if it be too low, the dampneſs, the vermin, and venomous creatures that breed in ponds and marſhy places, add much to their inſalubrity. A ſituation on a riſing ground, or on the ſide of a hill, is the moſt happy, eſpecially if the ground be not too ſteep; if the ſlope be eaſy, and in a manner imperceptible; if a good deal of level may be had near the houſe, and if it abounds with ſprings of water; for, being ſheltered from the fury of the winds, and the violent heat of the ſun, a temperate air will be there enjoyed; and the water that deſcends from the top of the hills, either from ſprings or rain, will not only ſupply fountains, canals, and caſcades, for ornament, but, when it has performed its office, will water the adjacent vallies, and render them

them fertile and wholeſome, if not ſuffered to ſtagnate in them. Indeed, if the declivity of the hill be too ſteep, and if the water be too abundant, a garden on the ſide of it may often ſuffer by having the trees torn up by the torrents and floods; and, the earth above tumbling down, the walls may be demoliſhed, and the walks ſpoiled. It cannot however be denied, that the ſituation on a plain or flat has ſeveral advantages that the higher ſituation has not; floods and rains make no ſpoil; there is a continued proſpect of champaigns, interſected by rivers, ponds, brooks, meadows, and hills covered with buildings, or woods; and the level ſurface is leſs tireſome to walk on, and leſs chargeable, than that on the ſide of a hill; the terrace walks and ſteps are not neceſſary; but the greateſt diſadvantage of flat gardens is the want of an extenſive proſpect, which riſing grounds afford.

The ſecond thing to be conſidered, in chuſing a plat for a garden, is a good earth or ſoil. It is ſcarce poſſible to make a fine garden in a bad ſoil: there are indeed ways to meliorate the ground, but they are very expenſive; and ſometimes, when the expence has been beſtowed of laying good earth three feet deep over the whole ſurface, a whole garden has been ruined, notwithſtanding the expoſure is ſoutherly or healthful, when the roots of the trees come to reach the natural bottom. To judge of the quality of the ſoil, obſerve whether there be any heath, thiſtles, or ſuch-like weeds, growing in it; for they are certain ſigns that the ground is poor; likewiſe, if large trees grow thereabouts, obſerve if they are crooked, ill-ſhaped, and grubby, of a faded green, and full of moſs, or infeſted with vermin; if ſo, the place is to be rejected:

but

but, on the contrary, if it be covered with graſs fit for paſture, then you may be encouraged to try the depth of the ſoil. To know this, dig holes in ſeveral places, ſix feet wide and four feet deep; if you find three feet of good earth, it will do well, but leſs than two will not be ſufficient. The quality of good ground is neither to be ſtony, nor too hard to work; neither too dry, nor too moiſt; nor too ſandy and light, nor too ſtrong and clayey, which is the worſt of all for gardens.

The third requiſite is water. The want of this is one of the greateſt inconveniencies that can attend a garden, and will bring a certain mortality upon whatever is planted in it, eſpecially in the greater droughts that often happen in a hot and dry ſituation in ſummer; not to mention the uſefulneſs of it in fine gardens, for making jets d'eau, canals, caſcades, &c. which are the greateſt ornaments of a garden.

The fourth thing required is the view and proſpect of a fine country; and, though this is not ſo abſolutely neceſſary as water, yet it is one of the moſt agreeable beauties of a fine garden: beſides, if a garden be planted in a low place, that is buried as it were, and has no kind of proſpect, it will be not only diſagreeable, but unwholeſome, by being too much ſhaded and obſcured; as many trees will rather retain inſalubrious damps, than communicate the refreſhing air, that is ſo purifying to vegetable nature. In ſhort, a garden neceſſarily requires, beſides the care of a gardener, the ſun, a good ſoil, a full, or at leaſt an open proſpect, and water; the laſt above all: and it would be egregious folly to plant a garden where any of theſe are wanting.

The

The area of a handſome pleaſure-garden may take up thirty or forty acres, not more; and, as for the diſpoſition and diſtribution of it, the following directions may be obſerved:

Firſt, there ought always to be a deſcent from the houſe to the garden, not fewer than three ſteps, but if there are ſix or ſeven, it will be better. This elevation of the building will make it more dry and wholeſome; from the head alſo of theſe ſteps there will be a farther view or proſpect of the garden.

In a fine garden, the firſt thing that ſhould preſent itſelf to the ſight, ſhould be an open lawn of graſs, which, in ſize, ſhould be proportionable to the garden. In a large garden, it ſhould not be leſs than ſix or eight acres; but, in middling or ſmall gardens, the width of it ſhould be conſiderably more than the front of the houſe; and, if the depth be one half more than the width of it, it will have a better effect. The figure of this lawn need not be regular; and if on the ſides there are trees planted irregularly, by way of an open grove; ſome of which may be planted forwarder upon the lawn than the others, whereby the regularity of the lawn will be broken; it will render it more like nature, the beauties of which ſhould always be ſtudied in the laying out and planting of gardens; for, the nearer theſe gardens approach to nature, the longer they will pleaſe; for what is a garden, but a natural ſpot of ground, dreſſed and properly ornamented? There are thoſe who have erred in copying what they call nature, as much as they who have drawn a whole garden into ſtraight lines, great alleys, ſtars, &c. by bringing the rougheſt and moſt deformed part of nature into their compoſitions of gardens: as for inſtance, where the ground

ground has been naturally level, they have, at a great expence, made hollows and raiſed mole-hills; ſo that the turf has been rendered not only more unpleaſant to walk upon, but much worſe to keep; and, after all the pains that have been taken to ape nature, the whole is as eaſily diſcovered to be the work of art, as the ſtiffeſt ſlopes, and moſt finiſhed parterres.

The great art, in laying out of gardens, is to adapt the ſeveral parts to the natural poſition of the ground, ſo as to have as little ground to remove as poſſible; for this is often one of the greateſt expences in making of gardens; and it may with truth be affirmed, that, wherever this hath been practiſed, nine times in ten it has proved for the worſe; ſo that if, inſtead of levelling hills to form large terraces, ſtiff ſlopes, and even parterres, as has been too often practiſed; or the ſinking of hollows, and raiſing of hills, as hath by others been done; the ſurface of the ground had only been ſmoothed and well turfed, it would have had a much better effect, and been more generally approved, than the greateſt number of theſe gardens, which have been made with an infinite expence both of time and money.

The next thing to be obſerved is to contrive a dry walk, which ſhould lead quite round the whole garden; for, as gardens are deſigned to promote the exerciſe of walking, the greater the extent of this dry walk is, the better it will anſwer the intent; ſince, in bad weather, or in dewy mornings and evenings, when the fields are unpleaſant or unſafe to walk over, theſe dry walks in gardens become uſeful and pleaſant; and ſuch walks, if laid either with gravel or ſand, may lead through the different plantations, gently winding about in an eaſy natural

way, which will be more agreeable than thoſe long ſtraight walks, which are too frequently ſeen in gardens.

But, as the taſte of deſigning gardens has of late altered from the former method, there are many perſons who have gone into the oppoſite extremes; and, in forming of what they call ſerpentine walks, have twiſted them about in ſo many ſhort turns, as to render it very diſagreeable to walk on them; and at the ſame time they ſtrike the ſight with as much ſtiffneſs and appearance of art as any of the methods formerly practiſed. In ſhort, the fewer turns there are in theſe walks, and the more they are concealed, the better they will pleaſe; and yet the turns, being eaſy and at great diſtances, will take off all the appearance of ſtraightneſs. And here let me obſerve, that there can be no better, or more eaſy and natural method of laying out theſe walks, than by tracing the eaſy turns made on a road, where it bends by the track of the coach wheels.

Theſe walks ſhould be ſo contrived, as to lead into ſhade as ſoon as poſſible; as alſo into ſome plantations of ſhrubs, where perſons may walk in private, and be ſheltered from the wind; for no garden can be pleaſing, where there is want of ſhade and ſhelter.

Another thing abſolutely neceſſary is, where the boundaries of the garden are fenced with walls or pales, they ſhould be hid by plantations of flowering ſhrubs, intermixed with laurels, and ſome other ever-greens; which will have a good effect, and at the ſame time conceal the fences, which are diſagreeable, when left naked and expoſed to ſight.

In ſituations where there is a good ſupply of water, the deſigner has room for adding one of the greateſt

greateſt beauties to the garden, eſpecially if it will admit of a conſtant ſtream; for in ſuch places, if the water is conducted through the garden, it will afford infinite pleaſure; for, although theſe ſtreams may not be ſufficient to ſupply a large ſurface, yet if theſe narrow rivulets are judiciouſly led about the garden, they will have a better effect than many of the large ſtagnating ponds or canals, ſo frequently made in large gardens; for where theſe pieces of water are large, if all the boundaries can be ſeen from one point of view, they cannot be eſteemed by perſons of judgment; and frequently theſe ſtanding waters are brought ſo near the houſe, as to render the air damp and unhealthy; and many times they are ſo ſituated, as to occaſion this inconvenience, and at the ſame time are not ſeen to any advantage from the houſe.

Where wilderneſſes are intended, they ſhould not be cut into ſtars, and other ridiculous figures, nor formed into mazes or labyrinths, which in a great deſign is trifling; but the walks ſhould be noble, and ſhaded by tall trees, and the ſpaces of the quarters planted with flowering ſhrubs and evergreens, whereby they will be rendered pleaſant at all ſeaſons of the year; and if there are hardy ſorts of flowers, which will thrive with little care, ſcattered about near the ſides of the walks, they will have a very good effect, in making a variety of natural beauties almoſt through the whole year. The ſituation of theſe wilderneſſes ſhould not be too near the houſe, leſt they ſhould occaſion damps; it is therefore better to contrive ſome open groves, through which there may be a communication under ſhade, from the houſe to theſe wilderneſſes; which are much the beſt when they are planted at the

the fartheſt part of the garden, provided they do not obſtruct the view of fine objects.

Buildings are alſo very great ornaments to a garden, if they are well deſigned and properly placed: but the modern taſte of crowding gardens with large uſeleſs buildings may well be cenſured, with regard as well to propriety as expence.

Statues and vaſes are alſo very beautiful objects, but theſe ſhould by no means be placed too near each other: for, when ſeveral of them appear at once, they fill and confound the eye, and loſe the beautiful effect they would have, if now and then one, properly ſituated, engages the ſight. What an expence might be ſpared, and applied to nobler purpoſes, if nature only were to be cultivated; if ſimplicity were ſtudied in this delightful art, rather than oſtentation! For any thing may be ſaid to be more of nature, than what we miſcall grandeur.

Fountains are alſo very ornamental to a garden, if they are elegant built, and where a conſtant ſupply of water can be obtained; but, if they are meanly erected, or have not water to keep them conſtantly running, they ſhould never be introduced into gardens; for nothing can be more ridiculous than to ſee a dry fountain, which, perhaps, at a great expence, may have water forced up to ſupply it for an hour or two, and no more, and this, perhaps, not in dry ſeaſons, when there is a general ſcarcity of water. The ſame may alſo be obſerved of caſcades, and other falls of water, which ought never to be contrived in gardens, where there cannot be a conſtant run of water; but where the ſituation of a garden is ſo happy, as to be naturally ſupplied with water, theſe falls and jets d'eau may be rendered very great beauties, eſpecially if they are well deſigned, and not made in the low

mean

mean taſte, in which too many of thoſe now in being appear, and where the water is made to fall over a parcel of regular ſteps of ſtone; but the fall ſhould be in one ſheet from top to bottom, where ſhould be placed many large rough ſtones to break and diſperſe the water, and to increaſe the noiſe of the fall.

Where the ground is naturally uneven, and has gentle riſes and falls, theſe may be ſo humoured, in the laying out of the ground, as to be rendered very great beauties; but theſe inequalities of the ground muſt by no means be cut into regular ſtiff ſlopes, nor amphitheatres, as has been too much the practice: but if the knolls are properly planted with clumps of trees or ſhrubs, and the ſloping ſides ſmoothed and left in their natural poſition, they will have a much better effect, than can be given them by all the regular angles, lines, and flat ſlopes, which have not been till of late introduced by the deſigners of gardens.

The taſte in laying out of gardens has greatly altered, and has been as greatly improved in England, in the compaſs of a few years; for, with the Revolution, the Dutch taſte of laying out gardens was introduced, which conſiſted of little more than flower-borders laid out in ſeveral ſcrolls of box work, clipped ever-greens, and ſuch low expenſive things; as alſo the walling round, and dividing the ſeveral parts of gardens by croſs walls; ſo that a garden, conſiſting of eight or ten acres, was generally divided by brick walls into three or four ſeparate gardens; and theſe were reduced to exact levels, having many gravel walks, and the borders on each ſide crowded with clipped trees, and ever-green hedges, dividing theſe ſmall incloſures again; ſo that the firſt making and planting of theſe ſmall gardens was

was attended with a greater expence, as was the keeping of them afterwards, than gardens of ſix times the extent, when deſigned after nature.

Whether this taſte ſo univerſally prevailed in England, in complaiſance to King William, or was owing to the low groveling taſte of thoſe perſons, who had the deſigning of moſt of the Engliſh gardens, is difficult to determine; but it is very certain, that Gentlemen, at that time, attended very little themſelves to the diſpoſition of their gardens, but were contented to leave the whole direction of them to perſons of the meaneſt talents that ever profeſſed the art; ſo that, ſoon after, when another taſte prevailed, theſe gardens were almoſt totally demoliſhed; and it would have been well, if a good, that is, a natural taſte had ſucceeded to the other; but this was not the caſe, for, though a more open and extenſive way of laying out gardens was introduced, yet this was little more than copying after the French, whoſe taſte was in making long avenues, ſtraight walks, ſtiff regular ſlopes, cabinets, fret-work, tall hedges cut into various ſhapes, jets d'eau, fountains, &c. So that there was little of nature ſtudied; but, on the contrary, all the geometrical figures introduced into wilderneſs work, as alſo in the parterres, and other compartments of the garden; nor is it ſo much to be wondered at, that this taſte prevailed in France, when the deſigns of all the principal gardens there were formed by architects, who were as ſtudious to have the ſymmetry of the oppoſite, or correſponding parts of the garden, as exact as the apartments of a habitation; nor has length of time, nor the improvements already made in other countries, amended their taſte, or convinced them of its abſurdity.

As the gardens of *Verſailles*, *Marli*, and others, were extolled for their magnificence, ſo the plans of them were almoſt univerſally copied; the deſigners or imitators rather, only varying the parts according to the ſituation or figure of the ground; and this was practiſed for ſeveral years, at a time when great ſums of money were expended in gardens, which might have rendered this country the moſt beautiful of any in Europe, had a natural taſte then prevailed in the deſigning of gardens; which is the more to be lamented, as the plantations, then made, have been many of them rooted out, to make way for the alterations and improvements which have been ſince introduced.

Several are of opinion, that in the deſigns of gardens, the taſte ſhould alter from time to time, as much as the faſhion of apparel; but theſe cannot be perſons of judgment; for, wherever there are natural beauties in a country, they will always pleaſe perſons of real knowledge; and it is frequently obſerved, that perſons of but little ſkill in the art of gardening are ſtruck with theſe beauties, without knowing the cauſe; therefore, where the beautiful parts of nature are juſtly imitated in gardens, they will be always approved by the judicious, let the taſte of gardening alter as it will.

When trees have been long growing in a garden, nothing can be more diſagreeable than to have them deſtroyed, to alter the garden according to the faſhion of the time, becauſe it requires much time to bring up trees to ſuch height as to afford ſhade and ſhelter; and, as the time is precious, ſo, where the diſpoſition of the garden is altered, there ſhould be great attention given to the preſervation of all the good trees, wherever they can be uſeful or ornamental.

There

There is another eſſential part of gardening, which is that of adapting the ſeveral ſorts of trees and ſhrubs to the ſituation and ſoil of the garden, as alſo to allow the trees a proper ſhare of room; but, however neceſſary this will appear, yet very few have made it their ſtudy, inſomuch that when one views many modern gardens, and ſees the great number of trees and ſhrubs crouded into them, he would be induced to believe, that private intereſt has had a greater influence than any other motive, with the deſigners. Indeed this fault may be often aſcribed to the maſter, who, perhaps, is too much in haſte for ſhade and ſhelter; and to this over haſte are owing the miſerable plantations of large trees, ſo often ſeen in gardens and parks. Numbers of perſons have indeed amuſed themſelves with the hopes of ſucceſs, by ſeeing theſe new-planted trees put out branches for a year or two, which they generally do; but in three or four years after, inſtead of making a progreſs, they begin to decay at the top, and continue ſo to do gradually, till they quite periſh.

In the buſineſs of deſign, a mean and pitiful manner ſhould be ſtudiouſly avoided, and the aim ſhould be always at that which is noble and great; not to bring too many little things into a garden, nor to make ſmall pieces of water, narrow walks, &c. eſpecially in large gardens; for it is much better to have a few great things, than four times the number of ſmall ones, which are trifling.

The general diſtribution of a garden, and of its parts, ought to be accommodated to the different ſituations of the ground; for a deſign may be very proper for a garden on a perfect level, which will by no means do for one where there are great inequalities in the ground; ſo that, as before intima-

ted, the great art of deſigning is properly adapting to the ſituation, and contriving to ſave the expence of removing the earth; to humour the inequalities of the ground; to proportion the number and ſorts of trees to each part of the garden; and to ſhut out, from the view of the garden, no objects that may become ornamental.

The Kitchen Garden

Should be contrived as near the ſtables as poſſible, for the convenience of carrying the dung thither; which, if at a great diſtance, will add to the expence of the garden.

As to the figure of the ground, it is of no great moment, ſince, in the diſtribution of the quarters, all irregularities may be hid; though, if there is full liberty, an exact ſquare, or an oblong, is preferable to any other figure.

The great thing to be conſidered is to make choice of a good ſoil, not too wet, nor over dry, but of a middling quality; nor ſhould it be too ſtrong or ſtubborn, but of a pliable nature and eaſy to work; and, if the place where you intend to make the kitchen garden ſhould not be level, but high in one part and low in another, it ſhould by no means be levelled; for by this ſituation you will have an advantage which could not be obtained on a perfect level; and this is, in having one part of dry ground for early crops, and the low part for late crops, whereby the kitchen may be the better ſupplied throughout the ſeaſon with various ſorts of herbs, roots, &c. And, in very dry ſeaſons, when in the upper part of the garden the crops will greatly ſuffer with drought, then the lower part will

will ſucceed; and ſo vice verſa: but a very low, moiſt ſpot of ground ſhould by no means be choſen for this purpoſe; for though, in ſuch ſoils, garden herbs are commonly more vigorous and large in the ſummer ſeaſon, yet they are ſeldom ſo well taſted or wholeſome as thoſe which grow upon a moderate ſoil; and eſpecially, as in this garden your choice fruits ſhould be planted, it would therefore be wrong to have a ſoil that is very wet.

This garden ſhould be fully expoſed to the ſun, and not overſhadowed with trees, buildings, and the like, which are very injurious to your kitchen plants and fruit trees; but if it be defended from the north wind by a diſtant plantation, it will greatly preſerve your early crops in the ſpring; as alſo from the ſtrong ſouth-weſt winds, which are very hurtful in autumn to fruit and garden herbs. But theſe plantations ſhould not be too near, nor very large; for it is generally found, where kitchen gardens are placed near woods or large plantations, they have been much more troubled with blights in the ſpring, than thoſe which have been more expoſed.

The quantity of ground neceſſary for a kitchen garden muſt be proportioned to the largeneſs of the family, or the quantity of herbs required. For a ſmall family, one acre of ground may be ſufficient; but, for a large family, there ſhould not be leſs than three or four acres; becauſe, when the ground is regularly laid out, and planted with eſpaliers of fruit trees, this quantity will be found little enough.

This ground muſt be walled round, and, if it can be conveniently contrived, ſo as to plant both ſides of the walls which have good aſpects, it will be an addition to the quantity of wall-fruit: and

thoſe ſlips of ground, which are without-ſide of the walls, will be very uſeful for planting of gooſeberries, currants, ſtrawberries, and ſome ſorts of kitchen plants, ſo that they may be rendered equally uſeful with any of the quarters within the walls; but theſe ſlips ſhould not be too narrow, leſt the hedge, pale, or plantation of ſhrubs, which incloſes them, ſhould ſhade the borders where the fruit trees ſtand. The leaſt width of theſe ſlips ſhould be twenty-five or thirty feet; but if they they are double that number, it will be better, and the ſlips will be more uſeful, and the fruit trees have a larger ſcope of ground for their roots to run. Theſe walls ſhould be built about twelve feet high, which will be a ſufficient height for any ſort of fruit. If the ſoil where you intend to place your kitchen garden be very ſtrong, you ſhould dig or plow it three or four times, before you plant any thing in it; and if you throw it up in ridges to receive the froſt in winter, it will be of great ſervice to meliorate and looſen its parts.

The manure, which is moſt proper for ſuch ſoils, is ſea coal aſhes, and the cleanſing of ſtreets or ditches, which will render it light much ſooner than any other dung or manure; and the greater the quantity of aſhes the better, eſpecially if the ground be cold; and where theſe aſhes are not to be obtained in plenty, ſea ſand is very proper, or rotten wood, or the rotten parts of vegetables; all which will greatly looſen the ſoil, and cauſe it to be not only eaſier to work, but alſo more advantageous to the growth of plants.

But, on the contrary, if your ſoil be light and warm, you ſhould manure it with rotten neats-dung, which is much preferable to any other for hot ſoils; but, if you uſe horſe-dung, it muſt be thoroughly

thoroughly rotten, otherwiſe it will burn up the crops upon the very firſt dry weather.

The ſoil of this garden ſhould be at leaſt two feet deep, but if deeper it will be ſtill better, otherwiſe there will not be depth enough for many ſorts of eſculent roots, as carrots, parſnips, beets, &c. which run down pretty deep in the ground. Moſt other ſorts of eſculent plants, whoſe roots appear ſhort, yet if their fibres, by which they receive their nouriſhment, are traced, they will be found to extend a conſiderable depth in the ground; ſo that, when ſtopped by meeting with gravel, chalk, clay, and the like, the plants will ſoon ſhew it by their colour and ſtinted growth.

You ſhould alſo endeavour to have a ſupply of water in the different parts of the garden, which, if poſſible, ſhould be contained in large baſons or reſervoirs, where it may be expoſed to the open air and ſun, that it may be ſoftened thereby; for ſuch water as is taken out of the wells, &c. juſt as it is uſed, is by no means proper for any ſort of plants.

In the diſtribution of this garden, after having built the walls, you ſhould lay out banks or borders under them, which ſhould be at leaſt eight or ten feet broad, whereby the roots of the fruit-trees will have greater liberty than in ſuch places where the borders are not above three or four feet wide; and upon theſe banks you may ſow many ſorts of early crops, if expoſed to the ſouth; and upon thoſe expoſed to the north you may have ſome late crops; but no ſort of deep-rooting plants ſhould be planted too near the fruit-trees, eſpecially peaſe and beans; though, for the advantage of the walls to preſerve them in winter, and to bring

them forward in the ſpring, the gardeners in general are too apt to make uſe of thoſe borders which are near the beſt-aſpected walls, to the great prejudice of their fruit-trees; but, for theſe purpoſes, it is much better to have ſome reed hedges fixed in ſome of the warmeſt quarters, under which you ſhould ſow and plant early peaſe, beans, &c. where they will thrive as well as if planted under a wall; and hereby your fruit-trees will be entirely freed from ſuch troubleſome plants.

Then you ſhould proceed to dividing the ground out into quarters, which muſt be proportioned to the largeneſs of the garden; but they ſhould never be made too ſmall, whereby your ground will be loſt in walks; and, the quarters being incloſed by eſpaliers of fruit trees, the plants therein will draw up ſlender, and never arrive to half the ſize they would in a more open expoſure.

The walks of this garden ſhould be alſo proportioned to the ſize of the ground, which in a ſmall garden ſhould be ſix feet, but in a large one ten; and on each ſide of the walk ſhould be allowed a border three or four feet wide, between the eſpalier and the walk, whereby the diſtance between the eſpaliers will be greater, and the borders, being kept conſtantly worked and manured, will be of great advantage to the roots of the trees; and in theſe borders may be ſown ſome ſmall ſallad, or any other herbs which do not continue long or root deep; ſo that the ground will not be loſt.

The breadth of theſe middle walks, here aſſigned them, may by many perſons be thought too great; but the reaſon for this is to allow proper room between the eſpaliers, that they may not ſhade each other, or the roots interfere and rob each other of their nouriſhment: but, where the walks are not required

required of this breadth, it is only enlarging of the borders on each ſide, and ſo reducing the walks to the breadth deſired.

But the walks of theſe gardens ſhould not be gravelled, for, as there will be conſtantly occaſion to wheel manure, water, &c. upon them, they would ſoon be defaced and rendered unſightly; nor ſhould they be laid with turf; for in green walks, where they are wheeled upon, or much trodden, the turf is ſoon deſtroyed, and thoſe places where they are much uſed become very unſightly alſo: Therefore the beſt walks for a kitchen garden are thoſe which are laid with a binding ſand; but, where the ſoil is ſtrong and apt to detain the wet, there ſhould be ſome narrow under-ground drains made by the ſide of the walks to carry off the wet, otherwiſe there will be no uſing of the walks in bad weaweather; and where the ground is wet, if ſome lime rubbiſh, flints, chalk, or any ſuch materials as can be procured at the leaſt expence, is laid at the bottom of theſe walks, and, if none of theſe can be had, a bed of heath or furze ſhould be laid, and the coat of ſand over it, which will preſerve the walks ſound and good in all ſeaſons. Theſe ſand walks are by much the eaſieſt kept of any; for, when either weeds or moſs begin to grow, it is but ſcuffling them over with a Dutch hoe in dry weather, and raking them over a day or two after, and they will be as clean as when firſt laid.

The beſt figure for the quarters to be diſpoſed into, is a ſquare or an oblong, where the ground is adapted to ſuch a figure; otherwiſe they may be triangular, or of any other ſhape which will be moſt advantageous to the ground.

When the garden is laid out in the ſhape intended, if the ſoil is ſtrong and ſubject to detain the

moiſture, or is naturally wet, drains ſhould be always made under-ground to carry off the wet from every quarter of the garden; for otherwiſe moſt ſorts of kitchen plants will ſuffer greatly by moiſture in winter; and, if the roots of the fruit-trees get into the wet, they will never produce good fruit; ſo that there cannot be too much care taken to draw off all ſuperfluous moiſture from the kitchen-garden.

Theſe quarters ſhould be conſtantly kept clear from weeds, and, when any part of the ground is unoccupied, it ſhould always be trenched up into ridges, that it may ſweeten and imbibe the nitrous particles of the air, which is of great advantage to all ſorts of land, and the ground will then be ready to be laid down, whenever it is wanted.

The ground in theſe quarters ſhould not be ſown or planted with the ſame crop two years together; but the crops ſhould be annually changed, whereby they will prove much better than when they conſtantly grow upon the ſame ſpot. Indeed, the kitchen gardeners near London, where the land is dear, are often obliged to put the ſame crop upon the ground for two or three years together; but then they dig and manure their land ſo well every year, as to render it almoſt new; though, notwithſtanding all this, it is conſtantly obſerved, that freſh land always produces the beſt crops.

In one of theſe quarters, which is ſituated neareſt to the ſtables, and beſt defended from the cold winds; or if either of the ſlips without the garden wall, which is well expoſed to the ſun, lies convenient, and is of a proper width; it ſhould be preferred, for a place to make hot beds for early cucumbers, melons, &c. The reaſons for this preference are: Firſt, There will be no dirt or litter carried

carried over the walks of the kitchen-garden in winter and ſpring, when the weather is generally wet, to render the walks unſightly. Secondly, The view of the hot beds will be excluded from ſight: And, laſtly, the convenience of carrying the dung into theſe ſlips; for, by making of a gate into the hedge or pale, wide enough for a ſmall cart to enter, it may be done with much leſs trouble than that of barrowing it through the garden; and, where there can be a ſlip long enough to contain a ſufficient number of beds, for two or three years, it will be of great uſe, becauſe, by the ſhifting of the beds annually, they will ſucceed much better than when they are continued for a number of years on the ſame ſpot of ground; and, as it will be abſolutely neceſſary to fence this melon-ground with a reed hedge, it may be ſo contrived as to move away in pannels, and then that hedge, which was on the upper ſide the firſt year, being carried down to a proper diſtance below that which was the lower hedge, and which may remain, there will be no occaſion to remove more than one of the croſs hedges in a year; therefore, whoever makes trial of this method will find it the more eligible.

The moſt important points of general culture conſiſt in well digging and manuring the ſoil, and giving a proper diſtance to each plant, according to their different growths, as alſo keeping them clear from weeds; for, if weeds are permitted to grow until their ſeeds are ripe, they will ſhed upon the ground, and fill it ſo as not to be gotten out again in ſeveral years. You ſhould alſo obſerve to keep your dunghills always clear from weeds; for it will be to little purpoſe to keep the garden clean, if this is not obſerved; for the ſeeds, falling among the dung, will be brought into the garden, whereby

there will be a conſtant ſupply of weeds yearly introduced, to the no ſmall damage of your plants and a perpetual labour occaſioned to extirpate them again.

Another thing, abſolutely neceſſary to be obſerved, is to carry off all the refuſe leaves of cabbages, the ſtalks of beans, and haulm of peaſe, as ſoon as they are done with; for the ill ſcent, which moſt people complain of in kitchen-gardens, is wholly occaſioned by theſe things being ſuffered to rot upon the ground; therefore, when the cabbages are cut, all leaves ſhould be carried out of the garden while they are freſh, at which time they may be very uſeful for feeding of hogs or other animals; and this will always keep the garden neat and free from ill ſcents.

[For further inſtructions and directions reſpecting the culture of gardens, pleaſure grounds, &c. ſee *Mawe*'s Every Man his own Gardener, *Miller*'s Gardener's Calendar, and *Bradley* on Gardening and Huſbandry.]

On Active and Retired Life.

IN vain philoſophers with warmth conteſt
Life's ſecret ſhade, or open walk is *beſt*.
Each has its ſeparate joys, and each its uſe;
This calls the patriot forth, and *that* the muſe.
Hence not alike to all the ſpecies, Heav'n
An equal thirſt of public fame has giv'n;
Patrius it forms to ſhine in action great;
Whilſt *Decio*'s virtues beſt adorn retreat.
On active life if *all* would build a name;
Where had been *Homer*'s, *Virgil*'s, *Milton*'s fame?
Had *theſe* great authors left the ſacred nine,
To gain ambitious honour's crowded ſhrine,
The grove forſaken, and the lyre unſtrung,
No raptur'd heart had bleſt the poet's ſong:
Nor *Pope*'s inſtructive muſe had wing'd her flight
To themes, * untried before, of *juſt* and *right*.

Let ſatire blaſt with every mark of hate,
The *vain aſpirer* or *diſhoneſt great*,
Whom love of wealth, or wild ambition's ſway,
Puſh forward ſtill regardleſs of the way;
And ſordid ſouls, who labour on with pain
For the low lucre of an *uſeleſs* gain,

* Eſſay on Man.

Wiſe but to get, and active but to ſave,
May ſcorn deſerv'd, purſue him to the grave.
But he who, mov'd by love of honeſt praiſe,
Pants for the laurel, or would wear the bays;
In arts or arms would ſhine, yet ſcorns the prize,
If thro' the miry paths of vice it lies;
Who turns his fortune to each gen'rous uſe,
Th' oppreſs'd to raiſe, or merit to produce—
What cold recluſe with reaſon can deſpiſe
A principle ſo juſt, an aim ſo wiſe?

Where reaſon ballances this juſt deſire,
'Twere dangerous folly to ſuppreſs the fire.
What laurels prompt the hero's uſeful rage!
What prize the patriot's weighty toils engage!
Each public paſſion bound in endleſs froſt,
Each deed of ſocial worth for ever loſt.
O! may the muſe inſpire the love of praiſe,
Raiſe the bright paſſion; but with *judgment* raiſe!
Tho' low her note, and quite unknown her voice,
She recommends the patriot and his choice,
Bids him the ſteep aſcent to honour take,
Nor till the ſummit gain'd, her paths forſake.
Not that *ſucceſs* alone true fame attends,
He too ſhall reach it who but well intends;
Then dare attempt, and leave to Heav'n the reſt;
Sure to ſucceed, or be approv'd at leaſt.
See, 'midſt the vanquiſh'd heroes, * *Falkland* lies;
His gen'rous efforts vain, and vain his ſighs;

Yet

* He was killed in the civil wars.

Yet true to merit, faithful records tell
To diſtant ages how the patriot fell,
Ev'n yet in hiſtory his virtues live;
And his great fame to lateſt time ſhall give.
Bleſt youth! inſur'd the ſweeteſt voice of praiſe,
Who ſtands approv'd in *Pope*'s unrivall'd lays.
Grave precepts, fleeting notions may impart:
But bright examples beſt inſtruct the heart:
Then look on *Patrius*, let his conduct ſhow
From active life what various bleſſings flow.
In him a juſt ambition ſtands confeſt:
It warms, but not inflames his equal breaſt.
See him in ſenates act the patriot's part,
Truth on his lips, the public at his heart.
There neither fears can awe, nor hopes controul
The honeſt purpoſe of his ſteady ſoul.
No mean attachments e'er ſeduc'd his tongue
To gild the cauſe his heart ſuſpected wrong,
But deaf to envy, faction, ſpleen, his voice
Joins here or there, as reaſon guides his choice.
True to *one* point, his faithful labours tend,
And all his toils in *Britain*'s intereſt end.

Yet not his heart the public only ſhares,
Each individual taſtes his gen'rous cares;
To him each neighbour ſafe refers his claim,
The right he ſettles, and abates the flame.
Nor arts nor virtue aſk of him in vain,
Nor unreliev'd the injur'd e'er complain.
For him, the hand unſeen, are prayers prefer'd,
And grateful vows in diſtant temples heard;

Like

There ev'ry plant of uſeful produce grows,
There ſcience ſprang, and thence inſtruction flows;
There true philoſophy erects her ſchool,
There plans her problem, and there forms her rule;
There ev'ry ſeed of ev'ry art began,
And all that eaſes life and brightens man.

'Twas hence great *Newton*'s mighty genius ſoar'd,
And all creation's wond'rous range explor'd;
Far as th' Almighty ſtretch'd his utmoſt line,
He pierc'd in thought, and graſp'd the vaſt deſign.
Too long had darker ages ſought in vain
The ſecret *ſcheme of nature* to explain;
Too long had truth eſcap'd each ſage's eye,
Or faintly ſhone thro' vain philoſophy.
Each ſhapeleſs offspring of their feeble thought
A darker veil o'er genuine ſcience brought,
Still ſtubborn fact o'erthrew their fruitleſs toil;
For truth and fiction who ſhall reconcile?
But *Britain*'s ſons a ſurer guide purſue,
Nor dread the maze, ſince *Newton* gave the clue.
Where'er he ſearch'd, true ſcience rear'd her head,
Whilſt far before her puzzled ignorance fled,
From each bleſt truth theſe noble ends he draws,
Uſe to mankind, and to his God *applauſe*.

Taught by his rules, ſecure the merchant rides,
Whilſt threat'ning ſeas roll high their dreadful tides,
And either *India* ſpeeds her precious ſtores,
'Midſt various dangers ſafe to *Britain*'s ſhores.

Long

Long as thoſe orbs he weigh'd ſhall ſhed their rays,
His truths ſhall guide us, and ſhall laſt his praiſe.

Yet if ſo juſt their praiſe, the uſe ſo great,
Syſtems to poiſe and ſpheres to regulate,
To teach the ſecret, well-adapted force
That ſteers of *heav'nly* orbs th' unvaried courſe;
Far brighter honours wait the nobler part,
To *ballance manners*, and conduct the *heart*.
Order *without* us, what imports it ſeen,
If all is reſtleſs anarchy *within?*
Fir'd with this thought great *Aſhley*, gen'rous ſage!
Plan'd in ſweet leiſure his * inſtructive page.
Not orbs he weighs, but marks with happier ſkill
The ſcope of *action* and the poiſe of *will*:
In fair proportion here deſcrib'd we trace
Each *mental* beauty, and each moral grace,
Each uſeful paſſion taught its tone deſign'd.
In the nice concord of a well-tun'd mind.
Does mean ſelf-love contract each ſocial aim?
Here public tranſports ſhall thy ſoul inflame.
Virtue and deity ſupremely fair,
Too oft delineated with looks ſevere,
Reſume their native ſmiles and graces here.
Sooth'd into love relenting foes admire,
And warmer raptures ev'ry friend inſpire.

Such

* See the Characteriſtics, particularly the Inquiry concerning Virtue and the Moraliſts.

Such are the fruits which from retirement ſpring,
Theſe bleſſings eaſe and *learned* leiſure bring.
Yet of the various taſks mankind employ,
'Tis ſure the hardeſt, leiſure to enjoy.
For one who knows to taſte this godlike bliſs,
What countleſs ſwarms of vain pretenders miſs;
Tho' each dull plodding thing, to ape the wiſe,
Ridiculouſly grave, for leiſure ſighs,
(His boaſted wiſh from buſy ſcenes to run)
Grant him that leiſure and the fool's undone.
The Gods to curſe poor *Demea* heard his vow,
And buſineſs now no more contracts his brow:
No real cares, 'tis true, perplex his breaſt,
But thouſand *fancy'd* ills his peace moleſt:
The lighteſt trifles ſolid ſorrows prove,
And the long ling'ring wheel of life ſcarce ſeems to move.

Uſeleſs in buſineſs, yet unfit for eaſe,
Nor form'd to ſerve mankind, nor ſkill'd to pleaſe,
Such heavy animals of ſpurious race
Live but the public burthen and diſgrace.
Like mean *attendants* on life's ſtage are ſeen,
Drawn forth to *fill*, but not *conduct* the ſcene.

The mind not taught to think, no uſeful ſtore
To fix reflection, dreads the vacant hour.
Turn'd on itſelf its num'rous wants are ſeen,
And all the mighty void that lies within.

Yet

Yet cannot wiſdom ſtamp our joys complete,
'Tis conſcious virtue crowns the bleſt retreat.
Who feels not *that*, the private path muſt ſhun,
And fly to public view t' eſcape his own,
In life's gay ſcenes uneaſy thought ſuppreſs,
And lull each anxious care in dreams of peace.
'Midſt foreign objects not employ'd to roam,
Thought, ſadly active, ſtill corrodes at home,
A ſerious moment breaks the falſe repoſe,
And guilt in all its naked horrors ſhows.
He who would taſte retirement's joys refin'd,
The fair receſs muſt ſeek with *cheerful* mind.
No cynic's pride, no bigot's heated brain,
No diſappointed hope, nor love's fantaſtic pain,
Muſt enter with him the ſequeſter'd cell,
With pleaſing ſolitude who means to dwell;
But equal paſſions muſt his boſom rule,
A judgment candid, and a temper cool,
Enlarg'd with knowledge, and in conſcience clear,
Above life's empty hopes, and death's vain fear.
Such he muſt be who greatly lives alone—
Such *Portio* is in crowded ſcenes unknown.
For public life with ev'ry talent born,
Portio far off retires with decent ſcorn;
Tho' without buſineſs, never unemploy'd,
And life, as more at leiſure, more enjoy'd:
For who like him can various ſcience taſte,
His mind will never want an endleſs feaſt.

In

In his bleſt evening walk may'ſt thou, may I,
Oft friendly join in ſweet ſociety.
Our lives like his in one ſmooth current flow,
Nor ſwell'd with tempeſts, nor too calmly ſlow!
Whilſt he like ſome great ſage of *Rome* or *Greece*,
Shall calm each ruffling doubt and ſpeak us *peace*,
Correct each thought, each wayward wiſh controul,
And ſtamp with ev'ry virtue all the ſoul.

Ah! how unlike is *Umbra*'s gloomy ſcene,
Eſtrang'd from all the cheerful ways of men!
There ſuperſtition works with baneful pow'r,
And darkens every melancholy hour.
Unnumber'd fears corrode and haunt his breaſt,
With that which whim or fancy can ſuggeſt.
In vain for him kind nature pours his ſweets;
The viſionary ſaint no joy admits,
But ſeeks with *pious ſpleen* fantaſtic woes,
And for Heav'n's ſake Heav'n's *offer'd good* foregoes.
Whate'er our choice, we ſtill with pride prefer,
And all who deviate vainly think muſt err:
Clodio in books and abſtract notions loſt
Sees none but knaves and fools in honour's poſt;
Whilſt *Syphax*, fond on fortune's ſea to ſail,
And boldly drive before the flatt'ring gale,
Forward her dang'rous ocean to explore,
Condemns as cowards thoſe who make the ſhore.
Not ſo *Albinus*, he at leiſure views
The ways of men, and what is beſt purſues;

Sees

Sees all to *univerſal* good conſpire,
The hero's paſſion and the poet's fire;
Each figure plac'd in nature's wiſe *deſign*,
With true proportion and exacteſt line,
Sees lights and ſhades unite in due degree,
And form the *whole* to faireſt ſymmetry.

The

The Pleaſures of a Rural Life.

HAPPY the man who leads the rural life,
With face of pleaſure owns his humble ſtate;
And loſt to envy, faction, care and ſtrife,
Diſdains the follies which attend the great.

King of his peaceful realm he lives ſecure,
Calls independence (ſovereign bliſs) his own,
Scorns the Circean call of faſhion's lure,
Nor feels the thorny roſes of a crown.

With heart eſtrang'd from pain, unvex'd he lives,
Low in the herbag'd, ſweet ſequeſter'd vale,
Amid the joys which calm contentment gives;
For calm contentment loves the cottag'd dale.

His is one ſcene of ever-blooming eaſe,
Bleſſings on bleſſings gild his ſtill retreat,
Each thought that innocence can yield to pleaſe,
And all each parent virtue makes compleat.

Delightful ſtate! give me one bleating flock;
Let me but call one lowing herd my own!
Quick would I fly, ye pow'rs, to ſhun the rock
Where monſter vice erects her ebon throne!

The tow'ring elm ſhould canopy my ſeat,
And guard me from each rude, inſulting wind,

Salubrious

Salubrious herbs give reliſh to my meat,
And health, by temp'rance, blooming vigour find.

Oh! how the groves, the fountains and the bow'rs,
The winding vallies and their purling rills
Alternate teſtify his happy hours,
Whoſe guileleſs boſom rural pleaſure fills.

Free from the ſordid miſer's lucrous rage,
Enjoys a competence, nor wiſhes more;
Unknown to pain, he mellows into age,
And thinks his *little* is an *ample ſtore*.

Thrice happy he! how ſweet is life thus led!
Where low ambition never durſt intrude;
Where ſleep refective downs the homely bed,
And gold-clad cares moleſt not ſolitude.

Grant me, ye pow'rs, ſome unfrequented ſeat,
Remote from jarring life's tumultuous rage;
Far from the habitations of the great,
A fit receſs to ſtudy nature's page.

When from the dappled Eaſt, the mountain's brow,
Bright Phœbus ſprinkles with expanding gold;
To heaven's Supreme in worſhip let me bow,
And next with pleaſing care my flocks unfold.

Then, while each copſe reſounds with early ſtrains,
The voice of nature from the choriſts round;
I'd gladly traverſe o'er the dew-bright plains,
Where blitheſome lambkins innocently bound.

Thus

Thus bleſt I'd tread the wide-extending glade!
And taſte the pleaſures morning proſpects bring!
At eve's approach I'd ſeek ſome falling ſhade,
And ſing the beauties of the blooming ſpring.

Oft as the ſun ſhould gild each rural ſeat,
With ſofteſt gleamings of the evening's ray;
As oft would I from worldly cares retreat,
And ſacred homage to Jehovah pay.

While ſolemn rapture thus my boſom fills,
O'er the extended ſcene ſhould ſtray mine eyes;
Survey the plains, the vallies, meads and hills,
And all the glories of the Weſtern ſkies.

See how the ſetting ſun declines his pow'r,
And weakly glitters o'er the verge of day;
Taſte odours common to the ev'ning hour,
And hear the muſic of each verdant ſpray.

Oh! there to find the truly happy ſpace,
Review creation's charms till I admire,
The forming pow'r my curious ſearch ſhould trace,
My muſe ſhould glow with unaccuſtom'd fire.

To Him, great cauſe! ſole univerſal good!
My pray'rs ſhall riſe with ev'ry opening day;
To Him who gives me breath, and life and food,
Each eve my muſe ſhall ſoar with thankful lay.

Ode to Solitude.

OH! Solitude, inſtructive maid!
Wrap me in thy ſequeſter'd ſhade,
And all my ſoul employ;
From folly, ignorance, and ſtrife,
From all the giddy whirls of life,
And loud unmeaning joy!

While in the ſtateſman's glowing dream,
Fancy pourtrays the high-wrought ſcheme,
And plans a future fame:
What is the phantom he purſues?
What the advantage that accrues?
Alas! an empty name.

To him the grove no pleaſure yields,
The moſſy bank, nor verdant fields,
Nor daiſy-painted lawns;
In vain, th' ambroſial gale invites,
In vain all nature ſheds delights,
Her genuine charms he ſcorns!

Pleaſure allures the giddy throng;
The gay, the vain, the fair, the young,
All bend before her ſhrine;
She ſpreads around deluſive ſnares,
The borrow'd garb of bliſs ſhe wears,
And tempts in form divine.

Faſhion, with wild tyrannic ſway,
Directs the buſineſs of the day,
And reigns without controul;
The beaus and ſparkling belles confeſs,
She animates the modes of dreſs,
And chains the willing ſoul.

Can theſe, the ſlaves of Faſhion's pow'r,
Enjoy the ſilent tranquil hour,
And bloom with nature's glow?
Or, to the votaries of ſenſe,
Can Solitude her ſweets diſpenſe,
And happineſs beſtow?

Ye ſages, who, with anxious care,
Rov'd through the fleeting tracks of air,
A vacuum to find;
Wiſer had ye employ'd your ſkill,
With ſolid ſenſe, and worth to fill
The vacuum of the mind!

Let *choice*, not wrinkled ſpleen engage
The mind, to quit the world's gay ſtage, *
Where folly's ſcenes are play'd;
Sour diſcontent, and pining care,
Attaint the fragrance of the air,
Diſturb the ſilent ſhades.

Not to the monkiſh moſs-grown cell,
Where Superſtition loves to dwell,
Bleſt Solitude retires;

They

* See page 23.

They only feel her genuine pow'r,
Whoſe converſe in the lonely hour
Each ſocial deed inſpires.

Not wounded by misfortune's dart,
I ſeek to eaſe the rankling ſmart
Of thorny feſt'ring woe;
But, far remote from crouds and noiſe,
To reap fair Virtue's placid joys,
In Wiſdom's ſoil they grow.

I aſk not pageant pomp, nor wealth,
For, bleſt with competence and health,
'Twere Folly to be great!
May I thro' life ſerenely ſlide,
As yon clear ſtreams that ſilent glide,
Nor quit this lov'd retreat.

Beneath this leafy arch reclin'd
I taſte more true content of mind
Than frolic mirth can give;
Here, to the buſy world unknown,
I feel each bliſsful hour my own,
And learn the art to live!

While turning nature's volume o'er,
Freſh beauties riſe, unſeen before,
To ſtrike th' aſtoniſh'd ſoul!
Our mental harmony improves,
To mark each planet as it moves,
How all in order roll!

From Nature's fix'd unerring laws,
We're lifted to th' eternal cauſe,
Which moves this lifeleſs clod!
This wond'rous frame, this vaſt deſign,
Proclaim the workmanſhip divine,
The architect, a God.

Oh! ſacred bliſs, thy paths to trace,
And happieſt they of human race
To whom this pow'r is giv'n,
Each day in ſome ſequeſter'd ſhade,
By Contemplation's foſt'ring aid,
To plume the ſoul for Heav'n.

The Benefits of Solitude.

I.

SWEET Solitude, thou placid queen,
Of modeſt air and brow ſerene!
'Tis thou inſpir'ſt the poet's themes,
Wrapt in ſoft viſionary dreams.

II.

Parent of Virtue, nurſe of Thought,
By thee were ſaints and patriarchs taught;
Wiſdom from thee her treaſures drew,
And in thy lap fair Science grew.

III.

Whate'er exalts, refines and charms,
Invites to thought, to virtue warms;
Whate'er is perfect, fair and good,
We owe to thee, ſweet Solitude!

IV.

In theſe bleſt ſhades doſt thou maintain
Thy peaceful, unmoleſted reign:
No turbulent deſires intrude
On thy repoſe, ſweet Solitude!

V.

With thee the charm of life ſhall laſt,
Ev'n when its roſy bloom is paſt;

And when ſlow-pacing Time ſhall ſpread
Its ſilver bloſſoms o'er my head,

VI.

No more with this vain world perplex'd,
Shalt thou prepare me for the next;
The ſprings of life ſhall gently ceaſe,
And angels point the way to peace.

Solitude the Friend of Contemplation.

THOU beſt companion, beſt of friends,
Who ſtill my evening hour attends,
And hides me from the ſenſeleſs eye
Of prating Folly paſſing by:

When the bright gleams of day expire,
I to thy lonely walks retire;
And, as the ſhadows round me cloſe,
My paſſions drop into repoſe.

Allur'd by thee, I ſhun the loud
Unmeaning mirth that charms the crowd;
My mind, no more in fetters bound,
Sports o'er thy ſolitary ground.

Refreſhing as the weſtern gale,
When herbs and ſhrubs their ſweets exhale;
Or as the fall of ſummer rains,
When torrid ſuns have ſcorch'd the plains;

I feel

I feel thy cheering influence dart
Freſh ſpirits to my fainting heart;
With brighter hopes my boſom glows,
In clearer ſtreams my pleaſure flows.

Bleſt be thy pow'r that gave me eaſe,
When folly could no longer pleaſe;
When ſick'ning with the painful ſtrife,
I fled from the falſe joys of life. *

Grateful I own thy gentle ſway,
From hour to hour, from day to day;
My ſoul, entire by thee poſſeſs'd,
Perceives herſelf completely bleſt.

Wiſdom with thee delights to dwell,
And decks with flowers thy hallow'd cell;
Content and peace to thee belong,
And all the matchleſs pow'rs of ſong.

When mute the groves and calm the breeze,
Scarce trembling in the aſpen trees;
When not one ſound is heard to call
The tattler from her babbling hall;

* If a man be fit for living in the country, by his natural diſpoſition, or by having (if I may ſo term it) gone through ſuch a fermentation in gay or buſy life that turbulence is evaporated, and ſerenity is not inſipid to him, he may ſpend a very creditable and agreeable life in a ſylvan retreat.

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When ſenſe is wholly loſt in thought,
And paſſion into ſtillneſs brought;
When Reaſon ſtill too much allied
To her own cauſe forgets her pride;

Then Solitude unfolds the ſcroll
Of Nature to th' aſtoniſh'd ſoul;
All things appear ſo good, ſo fair,
We wonder whence and what we are.

Conſcious of a creative Pow'r,
That forms the man and rears the flow'r,
Imagination upward ſoars,
And as ſhe contemplates, adores.

Devotion pure the boſom warms,
Diſpels the miſt and lulls the ſtorms;
No more we heſitate to praiſe
The glorious Author of our days.

Thus bleſt is he whoſe deviate youth
Finds ſafety in the paths of truth;
Who neither ignorant nor rude
Thus ſpends his hours in Solitude.

Rural Amuſements.

WITH ſplendid charms Sol's eaſtern rays unfold,
And tinge the mountains with a fluid gold.
To life he wakes the dew-bright earth around,
And ſpreads his luſtre o'er the ſpangled ground.
With light reſplendent o'er the vallies plays;
The landſkips ſmile, and court his cheering rays;
Millions of inſects into life ariſe,
And taſte the mildneſs of the morning ſkies:
On ev'ry ſpray the dew-drops twinkle round;
With artleſs ſongs the hills and vales reſound,
And from the woods the *fawns* advancing bound.

To thee, all-cheering Sun, I raiſe my ſtrain,
Thou bright informer of the ſtarry train,
Thou heav'nly ſubſtitute of joys below,
From whoſe ſoft beams unnumber'd bleſſings flow!
It glads me now o'er dew-wet fields to ſtray,
And with the ſhepherd hail the infant day;
Who rous'd from leaden ſleep's oblivious chains,
Now leaves his cot and haſtens to the plains.
O'er bleating flocks his tender care renews,
And with content his wonted toils purſues.
When ſcorching beams their ardent influence ſhed,
He ſeeks ſome ſhade, and on a moſſy bed,

Amidſt the mingling trees ſoft ſhelter lies,
While buſy *Zephyr* thro' their foliage ſighs;
Or on the verge of ſome embower'd ril',
Sees thro' the graſs the pearly drops diſtil:
In coolneſs thus the live-long day he ſpends,
'Till *Sol*, declining, to the weſtward bends;
Then o'er the plain his bleating flocks beholds,
And whiſtling drives them to their wonted folds;

How happy's he! who thus employs his hours:
On plains, in groves, and cool ſequeſter'd bow'rs!
Whoſe peaceful life's ſecure from boiſt'rous ſeas,
The world's vexations, and from ſlothful eaſe.
Around him ſilence lulls to peace his ſoul,
While chearful hopes each riſing fear controul:
Exempt from cares which ſcepter'd honours bring,
He ſcorns to ſoar on proud ambition's wing:
Content with little, little he enjoys,
With ſuch true reliſh, as no guilt annoys.
One race of pleaſure crowns his happy ſtate,
Which ſtill is made by nature's bounty great.
Him ſimple truth and innocence attend,
And balmy eaſe and blooming health befriend;
In ev'ry ſhape he ſhifting *Nature* views,
And her with pleaſure thro' each ſcene purſues.
The *Summer*, *Autumn*, *Winter*, and the *Spring*,
Him bliſs alternate, and freſh pleaſures bring,
His life's one round of undiſturb'd repoſe;
The choiceſt bleſſing Heav'n on man beſtows.

Hear

Hear me, ye Muſes, with whoſe charms I'm fir'd,
And with whoſe influence I'm oft inſpir'd,
Give me, O! give me, ſuch a ſylvan life,
Devoid of care, of trouble, and of ſtrife;
Little poſſeſſing in a quiet ſtate,
I'd laugh at empires, and be truly great.

But ſtop, my Muſe.—Reſume the ſummer lay,
And ſing the labours of the fragrant hay.
Behold the ruſtic crew, with prongs and rakes,
Amidſt the heat the ruſſet hay-cock makes.
The old, the young, the maiden, and the ſwain,
Together join, and toil upon the plain.
With blended voice of joy, they wake the gale,
While honeſt glee reſounds from vale to vale,
See too, amidſt the heat, a ſimple ſcene!
From whence this noiſe? what can this tumult mean?
Lo! in the brooks the ſhepherds plunge the flocks,
Whoſe ceaſeleſs bleatings wake the echoing rocks.
Their ſnowy fleece they loſe with patient fears,
And bow ſubmiſſive to the ſounding ſhears.
At length, clean ſhorn, they are releas'd again,
And once more taſte the verdure of the plain.
While ſummer's glories ſcenes of bliſs diſpenſe,
With in-felt joy, it glads my ev'ry ſenſe,
To ſee the fields with waving harveſts ſmile,
And ſwelling beauties of the fruitful ſoil,
Replete with riches for the farmer's toil.

Now, let the painting Muſe ſtrive to intrude
Where *Nature* dwells in awful ſolitude:

When the bright Sun, in noon-tide heat's array'd,
I'd breathe the coolneſs of ſome verdant ſhade.
The bleſt retreat, where contemplation lives,
And ſober peace and gentle quiet gives.
Where the ſweet chaunters of the feather'd choir,
From ſultry faintneſs to the ſhades retire:
And big with ſorrow, where the turtle dove,
In mournful dirges, mourns her lifeleſs love.
There, on the verge of ſome ſoft-ſounding ſtream,
My Muſe retir'd, would chuſe her fav'rite theme,
And paint *Aurora*'s charms, the ſylvan glades,
And all the beauties of the ev'ning ſhades.
The wood-crown'd hill, and gentle purling flood,
The mazy valley, and the lofty wood,
The limpid ſprings, and ever-verdant bow'rs,
And balmy fragrance of the cloſing flow'rs.

When ſinking *Sol*, with downward orb deſcends,
And riſing night her gloomy vale extends;
When gentle murmurs whiſper in the breeze,
And ſoftly kiſs the ſleeping flow'rs and trees;
To ſome fair ſpot, the Muſes happy ſeat,
In thought engag'd, I gladly would retreat;
Of bounteous *Nature* take a full ſurvey,
And to th' Almighty conſecrate my lay.
And while the nightingales their notes prolong,
To NATURE's GOD I'd dedicate my ſong,
To whoſe all-bounteous hand all joys we owe,
And ev'ry earthly comfort here below.

Summer:

Summer: or, the Rural Proſpect.

[Written in Scotland.]

PERMIT my Muſe, in unaffected ſtrains,
To paint, in humble verſe, the rural fields:
The woods, hills, vallies, and the fertile plains,
With all the wealth ſpontaneous Nature yields.

The noiſe, the crowd, and buſtle of the town,
The putrid, ſmoaky, and unwholeſome air,
We'll change for rocks, where murm'ring ſtreams pour down,
Meand'ring riv'lets, round the villas fair.

Behold! already we have gain'd the ſteep,
Of this tall mountain, on whoſe top we ſtand,
Whoſe noble height ſurveys the rolling deep,
The hills, the plains, and vallies we command.

What firſt preſents, is Criffil's tow'ring top,
With craggy ſides, the pride of Scotia's ſhore,
Nor ſcorn the clouds on his tall head to drop,
Whilſt at the bottom raging billows roar:

On either ſide the bluiſh mountains riſe,
Irregularly rang'd, each fills its poſt,
And leſs'ning as they're diſtant from our eyes,
'Till in Heav'n's concave all our view is loſt.

See next the waves, that waſh the rugged beech!
The noble veſſels bounding with the tide,
The wiſh'd-for port, with ſwelling ſails, they reach,
And ſafe in Solway-firth at anchor ride.

Th' adjacent glebe will now attract our eyes,
Th' extenſive hills and vales that intervene,
We'll view kind Nature's beauties as they riſe,
And paint, in ſweet variety, the ſcene:

The pointed rocks in yonder craggy way,
Protect the ſcreech-owl in his peaceful reign,
Where gaping cavities exclude the day,
And hiſſing adders with the winds complain.

The Sun mounts onward to the noon of day,
The venerable oak, for ſhelter made,
Invites us to avoid his ſultry ray,
And quit the mountain for the cooling ſhade.

Deſcend, my Muſe! to yonder verdant dale,
Where flow'rs breathe ſweet; and now the gentle breeze
Floats in the air; the od'rous fanning gale
Moves ev'ry leaf, and trembles thro' the trees.

How ſweet this brook! behold, how calm the ſky!
The lowing herds o'erſpread the graſſy mead,
See how, in ſportive chace the ſwallows fly!
And on the hills the harmleſs lambkins feed.

With

With wearied ſteps the plowman plods his way,
Along the lea, with ſlow and ſteady pace,
The ſharpen'd ſhare o'erturns the ſtubborn clay,
And in rough furrows hides the verdant graſs.

The limpid rivulets in yonder dale,
Alternate glide along, now ſwift, now ſlow;
The murm'ring ſtreams embrace the gentle gale,
And kiſs the bending oſiers as they grow.

The moſſy banks oppoſe their ſilver way,
And into whirls the rapid current force,
The dancing rills amongſt the pebbles play,
And wildly gallop o'er the rugged courſe:

With ſilent haſte the angler bends his way,
To purling ſtreams, where ſport the ſcaly fry,
The finny tribe the tempting bait ſurvey,
Nor dread the hook enclos'd in artful fly.

Th' enticing lure upon the ſurface skims,
Now forwards, backwards, and now ſide-ways drawn;
The trout darts at it, eager, as he ſwims,
(Nor dreads the fraud) to make the prize his own.

The neighbouring fields, bedeck'd in verdant green,
With flow'rs beſpangled, next attract the eye,
And rouſe the ſenſe to view th' enchanting ſcene,
A ſcene on earth that emulates the sky!

The linnets whiſtle, and the lambkins play,
The gentle zephyrs curl the limpid ſtream,

The

The ſoaring lark ſalutes the op'ning day,
And warbles in the clouds his morning's theme.

Hark, how the cuckow makes the woods reſound!
And tell-tale Echo babbles with his ſtrains,
The hollow caves return the borrow'd ſound,
And ring the notes, unvaried, o'er the plains.

The ſhrill-tun'd thruſh, with ſweet, yet louder ſtrains,
Drowns the ſoft warbling of the leſſer choir.
The vales repeat the notes to diſtant plains,
Where in the breeze the faint-worn ſounds expire.

See all around for contemplation made!
Th' ambitious woodbine, how it climbs on high!
How gracefully theſe elms unite their ſhade,
To guard the ſweet-tun'd warblers of the ſky!

Yon ancient turret now decaying falls,
Which long has brav'd the winds and northern rains,
The owl, ſole monarch of his broken walls,
Safe in his ivy-mantled palace reigns;

The night he uſhers in with diſmal cries,
And howls at fairies dancing on the green;
His haunted court, the frighted ſchool-boy flies,
Where fancied ſpirits, clad in white, are ſeen.

Morpheus, in peace, his duſky mantle draws,
The wearied traveller homeward bends his way,
We now muſt cloſe the ſcene, and ſeek repoſe,
Tir'd with the pleaſures of a ſummer's day.

Solitude

Rural Solitude recommended.

[By a Lady.]

YE groves, and flow'ry vales, in you we find
The firſt unblemiſh'd joys for man deſign'd;
Your charming ſcenes th' attentive mind ſupply
With pleaſures in its nice variety:
Nature does here her virgin ſmiles afford,
And ſhews us Paradiſe again reſtor'd;
Our ſouls their former harmony acquire,
And vexing care and conſcious guilt retire.
Propitious *Solitude!* thou kind retreat
From all the vain amuſements of the great!
In thee alone, without diſguſt, we prove
The endleſs ſweets of innocence and love,
Beauty and wit may find a refuge here,
Unenvy'd ev'n Belinda might appear;
Each nymph would yield the unconteſted prize,
And ev'ry ſwain pay homage to her eyes.

Flouriſh, ye gentle ſhades, and rural ſeats;
Let endleſs verdure deck your ſoft retreats.
Peace dwell upon your banks, ye ſilver ſtreams,
The Muſes chaſte delights, and conſtant themes!
For ever you the poet's breaſt inſpire
With ſprightly joys, and wake the golden lyre.
What pow'r, enchanting *Solitude*, is thine!
That men, for thee, the deareſt ties reſign:

For

For thee the monarch lays his crown aſide,
And the young lover quits his weeping bride;
The hero gives the chace of honour o'er,
While fame, and glorious conqueſt, tempt no more.

Nothing is, perhaps, more terrible to the imagination, than an *abſolute* ſolitude; yet I muſt own ſuch a retreat as diſengages the mind from thoſe intereſts and paſſions which mankind generally purſue, appears to me the moſt certain way to happineſs. Quietly to withdraw from the crowd, and leave the gay and ambitious to divide the honours and pleaſures of the world, without being a rival or competitor in any of theſe advantages, muſt leave a perſon in perfect and unenvied repoſe.

Let me loſe the remembrance of this buſy world, and hear no more of its diſtracting tumults! Ye vain grandeurs of the earth! Ye periſhing riches and fantaſtic pleaſures! what are your proud boaſts? Can you yield undecaying delights, joys becoming the dignity of reaſon, and the capacities of an immortal mind? Ask the happy ſpirits above, at what price they value their enjoyments; ask them, if the whole creation could purchaſe one moment's interval of their bliſs: No?—one beam of celeſtial light obſcures the glory, and caſts a reproach on all the fading beauties this world can boaſt.

MRS. ROWE'S LETTERS.

The Pleaſures of Rural Solitude.

HAIL ſacred ſolitude! hail bleſt retreat!
The place of wiſdom, and of bliſs the ſeat;
Thy conſtant quiet fills my peaceful breaſt
With pleaſing joys and ſweet unbroken reſt:
Here jealous thoughts my heart can ne'er invade,
They cannot pierce this ſolitary ſhade.
But here, (remov'd from luſt's diſhoneſt ſtain)
True friendſhip dwells, which ſcorns all ſordid gain;
Here in full ſtreams and conſtant currents flow
All ſolid pleaſures man can hope to know;
Here in a deep receſs of thought we find
Comforts to pleaſe, and to exalt the mind;
Which both from friendſhip and from knowledge riſe,
Making us happy, as they make us wiſe.
Here, free from noiſe, with pleaſure I ſurvey
The agitated world's tempeſtuous ſea;
On whoſe rough billows thoughtleſs men are toſs'd,
And on the rocks of vice and folly loſt.
Some are by malice, or an adverſe fate,
Plung'd in the gulph of an afflicted ſtate:
But far the greateſt part, a frightful train,
(Tho' virtue courts them, but, alas! in vain)
Fly from her kind, her wide-extended arms,
Deaf to her calls, and blinded to her charms,

And

And, ſunk in pleaſures, or in brutiſh eaſe,
Seek, in a ſhipwreck ſtate, themſelves to pleaſe.
Here, may I always on this downy graſs,
Unknown, unſeen, my eaſy minutes paſs;
Till, with a gentle force, victorious Death,
(To cloſe my eyes, and ſtop a while my breath,)
My happy choice, my ſolitude invade,
And thus convey me to a *better* ſhade.

On Solitude and Reflection.

[By a Lady.]

SWEET Solitude! the muſe's dear delight,
Serene thy day, and peaceful is thy night;
Thou nurſe of innocence, fair Virtue's friend,
Silent tho' rapt'rous pleaſures, thee attend!
Earth's verdant ſcenes, the all-ſurrounding ſkies
Employ my wand'ring thoughts and feaſt mine eyes;
Nature in every object points the road,
Whence contemplation wings my ſoul to God;
He's all in all; his wiſdom and his power
Spring in each blade and bloſſom in each flower;
Smile o'er the meads, and riſe in every hill,
Glide in each ſtream, and murmur in each rill,
While nature moves obſequious to his will.
Heav'n ſhakes, earth trembles, and the foreſts nod,
While awful thunders ſpeak the voice of God.

Rural

Rural Felicity: An Epiſtle to a Friend.

Let whoſoever will be great,
And mount the pinnacle of ſtate;
Let me in ſweet repoſe be laid,
The tenant of a rural ſhade;
To paſs, from rough and boiſt'rous ways,
In peace and eaſe, my ſilent days:
So with a conſcience clear, may I
Both aged and unnotic'd die:

Sure death extremely terrifies
That wretched man who lives and dies,
To all beſides in general known,
A ſtranger to himſelf alone.

From the Chorus of SENECA's THYESTES.

WHILE you, my friend, the noiſy town approve,
And from the peace of rural ſhades remove;
Conſume your time in buſineſs and debate,
In court intrigues, and in affairs of ſtate;
A fortune more auſpicious and ſerene,
Me gently places in the rural ſcene;
The ſcene, where only real joys commence,
The ſcene of calm repoſe, and innocence.

Here, from the various ills of life I'm free,
Nor want the ſweets of town ſociety;
Here I enjoy, ſecure of all offence,
Society without impertinence:

The

The ſhouting vallies, and reſponding hills,
The laughing meadows, and the talking rills:
Cloſe-by I hear the ſoftly-whiſp'ring woods,
And from afar, the beating of the floods;
The birds from break of morn, 'till cloſe of day,
Repeat a never-ceaſing roundelay;
Whilſt liſt'ning echo, from their warbling throats,
Both catches and repeats the melting notes.

What lively pleaſures animate the days?
How does the night, bedeck'd with ſilver rays,
Sedately pleaſe, while her improving tale
Sweet *Philomela* warbles thro' the vale!
What beauteous dies the face of Heav'n adorn,
When dawning light firſt ſtreaks the riſing morn!
Promiſcuous objects entertain the ſenſe,
And various charms as variouſly diſpenſe;
The limpid ſprings reflect th' impending bow'rs,
The grazing cattle, and the trembling flow'rs;
In which the paſſing maid, with pleas'd ſurprize,
Beholds her ruddy cheeks and ſparkling eyes;
The ſun ſeems plung'd, with all his pointed rays,
And azure Heav'n its ſpacious front ſurveys:
Fair groves the plains enamel; to the ſkies,
The cloud-ſurpaſſing mountains ſeem to riſe;
From whoſe high ſummits, the *cærulean* main,
When undiſturb'd, preſents a glaſſy plain:
Or, when fair breezes o'er the ſurface play,
And to the coaſt direct their proſp'rous way;
As veſſels from afar their courſes bend,
They from its flowing boſom ſeem t'aſcend:

Or

Or when black ſtorms with boiſt'rous rigour ſweep,
And ruffle and deform the boiling deep;
When frowning Heav'n, with horror overcaſt,
Seems lower'd and bow'd with the contracting blaſt;
When ſhips at ſea are toſs'd and dread the ſhocks
Of treach'rous ſands, or more malignant rocks;
I view thoſe ills with pity they endure,
And yet rejoice——to find myſelf ſecure.

Here curious patterns for ingenious ſkill,
Both far and near, the various proſpect fill;
Here, beauty all its native charms imparts,
And ſeems to ſcorn th' embelliſhments of arts:
Here, vig'rous health its enemies removes,
Enlivens age, and youthful bloom improves;
Hither its choiceſt bleſſings it conveys,
Here, nature all her rural charms diſplays:
Theſe are the gifts of gracious Providence,
Obtain'd with freedom, and without expence;

Can a delight, more exquiſitely pure,
Than what theſe yield, ambition's ſelf procure?
Is not ambition's only aim, deſign'd
To huſh to needful reſt the craving mind?
This end purſuing, why ſhould we diſdain
Means that are eaſy, and a way that's plain?
Oh! take this courſe betimes, my friend, and ſpare
A world of trouble, and a world of care!
Hither, I ſay, with expedition, tend,
Leave vain purſuits, which oft in trouble end.

Happy

Happy the man, who taſtes the preſent hour,
Nor breaks his reſt for riches, or for pow'r;
Who governing himſelf, is juſt and wiſe,
Nor over others aims to tyrannize;
What ſingular advantage can we find
This way, to ſuit the well-diſcerning mind?
Can *India*'s ſtores give to th' expiring, breath?
Or will they bribe inexorable death?
Will courtly ſplendor, or imperial might,
The King of Terrors mollify, or fright?
The rich and great, will violent diſeaſe
Leſs torture? or can health more fully pleaſe?
Do all *internal* conſolations lie
In robes of tiſſue, or the tyrian dye?
Bleſs they not oft' the cottage?——or alone
Do they adorn the palace, or the throne?

Does real love, or faithful friendſhip dwell
In lofty domes, and not the lowly cell?
Alike the ſprightely liquor chears the ſoul,
From wooden cups, as from the china bowl; *
Charms not in ruſſet gown the rural maid,
As well as lady in her rich brocade?
Is not a little box, well fram'd and neat,
Full as commodious as the proudeſt ſeat?
Where is the difference, but in mere miſtake?
Cuſtom and fancy the diſtinction make.

Felicity

* Health is as much enjoyed, (and often more reliſht) by the peaſant in the cottage, as by the King upon the throne; peace of mind does not ſpring from the condition, but the actions of the poſſeſſor.

Felicity in mod'rate things we find,
If we to thoſe proportion but the mind;*
Small things ſupply what temperance requires, †
But——What can fill exorbitant deſires?
What trains of ills attend aſpiring pride?
'Tis all relenting tenderneſs deny'd;
It muſt withſtand innumerable foes,
Muſt plunge into innumerable woes;
'Tis forc'd to go, with inconſid'rate ſpeed,
Where fraud and baſe diſſimulation lead.
To compaſs wealth and well employ it too,
Seems more in general than frail man can do;
And of all thoſe, who to command ariſe,
How few are juſt, benevolent, and wiſe?
Who, like the ſun, are nat'rally inclin'd,
Like that to cheriſh, and direct mankind?
Rather a baneful influenee they caſt,
Like lightnings waſte, like exhalations blaſt;
Who, that's impow'r'd, inclinable is found
To raiſe dejected merit from the ground;
To free it from oppreſſion, or neglect,
Truth to defend, and reaſon to reſpect?

Then friend! with me, leave the licentious court,
Where faireſt dealing is the public ſport;

* It is an old proverb, cut your coat according to your cloth, and well worthy the regard of all! for contentment is the only way to human felicity.

† Man wants but little, nor that little, long.
DR. YOUNG.

In theſe ſerene retreats you oft may find
Fit emblems of the woes of human kind;
How our continual recreations are
The lively images of mortal care;
The ſtag (that flies his eager foes, diſmay'd,
And by his friends deſerted, or betray'd)
Shews of declining men the wretched ſtate;
The ſpangled trout (that with fallacious bait
The patient angler ſecretly inſnares)
The fall of ſelf-deluding fraud declares;
Or ſhews how fatal avarice may beguile,
By means unlook'd-for, and the ſpoiler ſpoil:
The ſoaring hawk (that ſwiftly from above
Darts on the crane, or the defenceleſs dove)
Shews how the raſh to ſudden ruin run,
The ſwift, in vain, would the rapacious ſhun,
The fierce are heedleſs of their foes defence,
And meekneſs is no check to violence:

The pheaſant glitt'ring in his ſhowy dreſs,
The fox, when prowling, or in cloſe receſs,
The lurking partridge, and the doubling hare,
With all the tenants of the field and air,
Purſu'd, ſurpriz'd, aſſaulted, and beſet,
(By dog, by gun, and circumventing net)
Shew that in vain are beauty, craft, and flight,
Againſt more ſubtle ſnares, and pow'rful might.

Lo! how for uſeful information ſprings
The graveſt leſſon, from the flighteſt things!

The

The little birds (by wanton boys beguil'd,
And of their eggs, or of their young deſpoil'd)
Demonſtrate, how fond man's expected joys,
Often, unlook'd-for, falacy deſtroys:

Behold what nature for her race prepares,
Th' effects of her proviſionary cares!
Obſerve the virtues of the teeming earth!
Which gives to ſeed infus'd, prolific birth;
Its operations on the ſecret grain,
By the congenial aids of ſun and rain;
Who can deſcribe the numerous herbs and flow'rs?
Their various graces, and their healing pow'rs? *
The looſer-offſprings of the fertile field?
And what the cultivated garden yield?
How vaſt a ſtore of rarities combine,
To ſhew the wonders of the skill divine?
The skill divine! reveal'd at equal rate,
In creatures both diminutive, and great!

Obſerve the ſeaſons of the circling year,
See in what order each of them appear;
How they in never-ceaſing round produce
Succeſſive bounties for delight, and uſe;
The opening flow'rs, firſt-riſing from their beds,
Peep forth, and ſhew their party-colour'd heads;
With various hues the neighb'ring fields are crown'd,
And living carpets beautify the ground;

* See Culpepper's Engliſh Herbal.

The airy ſongſters now renew their loves,
(Melodiouſly reſound the fields and groves)
And under ſhelt'ring leaves receſſes find
To build their neſts, and propagate their kind;
Thro' this gay ſeaſon, ſee on every ſide,
Nature appears dreſt like a youthful bride;
While Summer, Autumn, Winter, all declare
The works of God, how manifold they are.

In the ſequeſter'd ſcenes of rural life
Peace is enjoy'd, eſtrang'd from care and ſtrife;
A train of calm delights attend the day,
The ſolemn night, in ſilence ſlides away;
No ſtrumpet here in fulſome manner greets,
No ſtagg'ring drunkard joſtles in the ſtreets;
Here, unalarm'd, (we to repoſe retire)
No midnight cries of murder, or of fire;
Nor, grated ear, nor trembling fabric feels
The diſs'nant rumbling of the coaches wheels; *
No noiſe approaches 'till the morn appears,
And riſing Phœbus ſylvan nature cheers;
Except the whiſtling of the gentle breeze,
Or the ſoft murmurs of the ruſtling trees;
Except (inviting to delightful dreams)
We hear the purlings of th' adjacent ſtreams.

All

* In London, the ſilence of the night is oft diſturbed, and repoſe frequently chaced away, by watchmen crying the hour, coaches furiouſly drove along the ſtreets, and the alarms above alluded to, all which the inhabitants of the country are in general happy ſtrangers to.

All men for happineſs put in their claim,
Tho' *few* acquire it, 'tis the *general* aim;
To know it beſt, and its abode to find,
Is what's peculiar to the wiſeſt mind;
In human life, who muſt not ills endure?
They come, when moſt we think ourſelves ſecure;
To guard ourſelves by fortitude and art,
Againſt their force, is only wiſdom's part:
But ruſhing where they frequently abound,
Where they muſt be inevitably found,
Not treating them like enemies, but friends,
Is far from what true wiſdom recommends;
True wiſdom (being rightly underſtood)
Explores a *real*, not imagin'd good;
True goodneſs and true peace we only find,
Reſulting from the pleaſures of the mind. *

Happy the ſwain, thrice happy!——if his good
Was by himſelf completely underſtood;
He who the Peaſant's and the Prince's ways,
Had well obſerv'd,——immortal *Maro* ſays:
To that, can wiſe judicious men be foes,
Which *Virgil* well-approv'd, and *Scipio* choſe?
Where *Dioclefian* ended life, and fame?
And whence the meek and brave *Fabricius* came?
What need of gloſs where worth is plainly ſeen?
Falſe wealth and title varniſh o'er the mean;

* Peace of mind will be always productive of a ſolid and laſting tranquility in any ſtation, whether in town or country.

The man, in whom true merit is diſplay'd,
Wants not (like others) ſuperficial aid:
The ſtars and moon appear alone by night,
Yet from the ſun derive their borrow'd light;
The radiant ſun illuminates the day,
While each the great Creator's pow'r diſplay.

A rural life may elevate the ſoul,
Correct our reaſon, our deſires controul.
Retirement to the wiſe true pleaſure brings;
And gives free ſcope to contemplation's wings! *

A rural life with no diſdain was view'd,
'Till merit was by ſpecious pomp ſubdu'd;
'Till oſtentatious equipage and ſtate,
(Not memorable actions) formed the great;
Nor was it then diſhonourable found,
When the true great, and worthily renown'd
Made it their choice——when one reſign'd his crown,
And laid his *Carthagenian* glories down;
Thence (fame relates) once *Rome*'s dictator 'roſe, †
Her firm ſupport, and her ſecure repoſe:
True excellence not always is diſplay'd
In courts, or cities, ſplendidly array'd;
But——like the glorious ruler of the ſkies,
May ſet in ſhades! or may from ſhades ariſe.

---

* See Moſes Brown on the Univerſe, book the IIId.

† Luc. Quint. Cincinnatus.

The undiſturbed Felicity of Sylvan Retirement and Contemplation.

OH! knew he but his happineſs, of men
The happieſt he! who far from public rage,
Deep in the vale with a choice few retir'd,
Drinks the pure pleaſures of the Rural life.
. . . . . .
Sure peace is his; a ſolid life, eſtrang'd
To diſappointment and fallacious hope.
. . . . . The fall of Kings
The rage of nations and the cruſh of ſtates,
Move not the man, who from the world eſcap'd,
In ſtill retreats and flowery ſolitudes,
To nature's voice attends, from month to month
And day to day, thro' the revolving year;
Admiring, ſees her in her every ſhape,
Feels all her ſweet emotions at his heart;
Takes what ſhe liberal gives, nor thinks of more.

THOMPSON'S SEASONS.

The Rural Chriſtian.

WHILE far from noiſe, diſtracting care and ſtriſe,
I taſte the pleaſures of a country life;
Romantic, picturesque and rural views
Attract my notice and employ my muſe;
Here fields of ripening corn, there ſpacious plains,
With bleating flocks, engage the poet's ſtrains.
Nature appears in ſummer's green array,
And woodland ſongſters from each verdant ſpray
Salute the dawn, or mourn departing day.

While flow'rs of every hue the meads adorn,
And fanning breezes wave the bending corn;
Whilſt every object round me charms the ſight,
And ſober evening yields the world to night;
Let me *his* praiſes ſing who all things made,
Whoſe wiſdom, power and goodneſs are diſplay'd
Throughout the wide creation; Oh! my ſoul,
Adore that gracious God who form'd the whole,
And let his name reſound from pole to pole.

The Advantages of Retirement.

" BLEST be that hand divine, which gently laid
" My heart at reſt, beneath this humble ſhed;
" The world's a ſtately bark, on dang'rous ſeas,
" With pleaſure ſeen, but boarded at our peril:
" Here on a ſingle plank, thrown ſafe on ſhore,
" I hear the tumult of the diſtant throng,
" As that of ſeas remote, or dying ſtorms;
" And meditate on ſcenes more ſilent ſtill,
" Purſue my theme, and fight the fear of death.

" Here, like a ſhepherd gazing from his hut,
" Touching his reed or leaning on his ſtaff,
" Eager ambition's fiery chace I ſee;
" I ſee the circling hunt of noiſy men,
" Burſt law's incloſure, leap the mounds of right,
" Purſuing and purſued, each other's prey;
" As wolves for rapine, as the fox for wiles,
" Till death, that mighty hunter, earths them all."

DR. YOUNG.

Sylvan Tranquillity.

FAR from the pomp and ſplendour of the Court,
Where inſects glitter for the wiſe man's ſport,
I go, ſeceding from a world of ſtrife,
In ſylvan ſcenes to paſs a bliſsful life;
Where Nature, firſt-born empreſs of the globe,
Spreads o'er the ſcene her variegated robe;
Where ermine Innocence ſecurely reigns,
And fearleſs wanders o'er the verdant plains.

On the Return of Spring.

NOW the glad earth her frozen zone unbinds,
And o'er her boſom breathe the weſtern winds;
Already now the ſnow-drop does appear,
The firſt pale bloſſom of th' unripen'd year.
As Flora's breath, by ſome transforming power,
Had chang'd an iſicle into a flower;
In name and hue the ſcentleſs plant retains,
And winter lingers in its icy veins;
To this ſucceeds the violet's duſky blue,
And each inferior flower of fainter hue;
'Till riper months the perfect year diſcloſe,
And Flora cries, exulting, "*See my roſe.*"

Verſes

Verſes written in an Alcove.

NOW the moon-beams trembling luſtre
Silvers o'er the dewy green,
And in ſoft and ſhadowy colours,
Sweetly paints the chequer'd ſcene.

Here, between the op'ning branches,
Streams a flood of ſoften'd light,
There the thick and twiſted foliage.
Spreads the browner gloom of night.

Written over the Door of a ſmall Houſe in the Country.

AROUND this peaceful cot, this humble ſhed,
If Love, with Innocence and Virtue tread,
Tho' no proud column grace the gaudy door,
Where ſculptur'd elegance parades it o'er,
The ſwain ſhall look with pity on the great,
Nor barter quiet for a King's eſtate.

On the Longeſt Day.

RESPLENDENT lucid, beaming bright,
The Sun emits his faireſt ray;
Protracted beams defraud the night,
And give us univerſal day.

Now Nature ſmiles, now blooms the Roſe,
Now Vegetation's all alive;
Now, chearful, Summer's ſweets diſcloſe,
And all the fruits of Summer thrive.

Soon ſhall rich Autumn's copious ſtore,
Obedient to the Reaper's hand,
Spread, richly ſpread, the Farmer's floor,
And Plenty bleſs a ſmiling land.

And ſoon ſhall Winter's rigid rule
Deform the beauties of the plain,
While Man, inform'd in Nature's ſchool,
Shall wiſh the grateful Spring again.

Thus while the various ſeaſons roll,
May grateful thoughts to Heaven ariſe,
In preparation for the ſoul
That anxious ſees its native skies!

Rural Felicity.

O! Rus, quando te aſpiciam?

HORACE.

WELCOME peaceful, calm retreat,
Far from common ills of fate,
Welcome joys before unknown!
Every pleaſure, every bleſſing,
Every bliſs that's worth poſſeſſing,
Here's delight, and here alone!

Heaps of wealth amaſs'd in vain,
Give the ſordid miſer pain,
Nightly dread his boſom rends,
But content my wiſhes bounding
Meek-ey'd peace my bed ſurrounding,
Downy ſleep my call attends!

Innocence, and ſpotleſs Love,
Truth and honour round me rove;
Exil'd from the guilty town,
Cheerful books my time beguiling,
Wing the moments ever ſmiling,
'Till my lateſt ſand falls down!

An Harveſt Scene.

[Imitated from Thomſon's Seaſons.]

WAK'D by the gentle gleamings of the morn,
Soon clad, the reaper, provident of want,
Hies, chearful-hearted, to the ripen'd field:
Nor haſtes alone; attendant by his ſide
His faithful wife, ſole partner of his cares,
Bears on her breaſt the ſleeping babe; behind
With ſteps unequal trips the infant train.
Thrice happy pair, in love and labour join'd!

All day they ply their task; with mutual chat
Beguiling each the ſultry tedious hours;
Around them falls in rows the ſever'd corn,
Or the ſhocks riſe in regular array.

But when high noon invites to ſhort repaſt,
Beneath the ſhade of ſheltering thorn they ſit,
Divide the ſimple meal, and drain the cask:
The ſwinging cradle lulls the whimpering babe
Mean time; while growling round, if at the tread
Of haſty paſſengers alarm'd, as of their ſtore
Protective, ſtalks the cur with briſtling back,
To guard the ſcanty ſcrip and ruſſet frock.

An Invitation to Emma, after Marriage, to live in the Country.

COME, my dear girl, let's ſeek the peaceful vale,
Where honour, truth and innocence prevail;
Let's fly this buſy town—a neſt of ſlaves—
Where fortune ſmiles not but on fools or knaves;
Who merit claim proportion'd to their gold,
And truth and innocence are bought and ſold.
An humble competence we have in ſtore,
Mere food and raiment—KINGS *can have no more!*
A glorious patriarchal life we'll lead,
See the fruits ripen and the lambkins feed;
Frequent obſerve the labours of the ſpade,
And joy to ſee each yearly toil repaid.

In ſome ſequeſter'd ſpot a bower ſhall ſtand,
The fav'rite taſk of thy lov'd Damon's hand;
Where the ſweet woodbine claſps the curling vine,
Emblem of faithful loves like yours and mine!
Here will we ſit when ev'ning ſhades prevail,
And hear the night-bird tell its plaintive tale;
Till Nature's voice ſhall ſummons us away,
To gather ſpirits for th' approaching day;
Then on thy breaſt I'll lay my weary head,
A pillow ſofter than a monarch's bed.

A Rural Soliloquy.

RETIREMENT, thou celeſtial Solacer!
The care-toſt voyager's dear welcome bay,
Faint with the beating ſtorm of adverſe life.
Loſt, moſt deſir'd, moſt happy!
. . . . . .
All that below (of calm, of good and pure,
Of bland, or rational, devout, or ſweet,)
Is found in wiſdom's ſchool, to train, mature,
And lift ſublime the heart, inhabit here.
Here ſhines the hero, here *true* greatneſs lives,
Lives on its own, nor needs to ask without,
(Hard pen'ry) loans, from mean, dependent joys.

Leagu'd with the high-born Genii there, meek *Peace*,
Fair child of virtue, and her ſiſter-grace
Divine *Contentment*; with her little bleſt:
The dower beſtow'd on patient *Poverty*.
Happieſt abſtraction from the tempting world,
Not monkiſh, ſlothful, ſullen, and auſtere;
The *Palmer*'s pinnace, and the *Hermit*'s cell,
The falſe-religious Bedlam's beads and ſtraw.
No couch for indolence to hatch her dream:
But to repoſe for *Action*, to purge off
Rank *Envy*'s gall, the lep'rous ſpot of *Pride*,
Dropſied *Ambition*, *Pleaſure*'s fev'riſh heats,
The ſoul's conſumptive thirſt of *earthly* bliſs,

And

And her ill habits by example fix'd.
Where led in awful viſits to herſelf,
Internal intimacies charm the heart.
The home-brought ſtranger entertain'd and pleas'd
Feaſts with her kindred pow'rs, and happier grows,
Acquainted with the family within;
And from her centre thro' wide duty's ſphere
(Of ſacred and of ſocial) looking round,
Notes her high birth; and nobler walks abroad,
In acts of Faith, Benevolence, and Love,
With rank ſuperior, in the moral world.

BROWNE'S SUNDAY THOUGHTS.

The Pleaſing Exerciſes of a Rural Life.

THE buſy bee at noon I often view,
Now from the flow'rs exhauſt the fragrant dew;
With golden treaſures load his little thighs,
And ſteer his diſtant journey through the ſkies;
Some againſt hoſtile drones the hive defend;
Others with ſweets the waxen cells diſtend:
Each in the toil his deſtin'd office bears,
And in the little bulk a mighty ſoul appears.

Or when the ploughman leaves the task of day,
And trudging homewards whiſtles on the way;
When the big udder'd cows with patience ſtand,
Waiting the ſtroakings of the damſel's hand;

No

No warbling cheers the woods; the feather'd choir
To court kind ſlumbers to their ſprays retire;
When no rude gale diſturbs the ſleeping trees,
Nor aſpen leaves confeſs the gentleſt breeze:
Engag'd in thought, to Neptune's bounds I ſtray,
To take my farewell of the parting day;
Far in the deep the ſun his glory hides,
A ſtreak of gold the ſea and sky divides:
The purple clouds their amber linings ſhow,
And edg'd with flames rolls ev'ry wave below:
Here penſive I behold the fading light,
And o'er the diſtant billow loſe my ſight.

Now night in ſilent ſtate begins to riſe,
And twinkling orbs beſtrew th' uncloudy skies;
Her borrow'd luſtre growing Cynthia lends,
And on the main a glittering path extends;
Millions of worlds hang in the ſpacious air,
Which round their ſuns their annual circle ſteer,
Sweet contemplation elevates my ſenſe,
While I ſurvey the works of Providence.
O could the Muſe in loftier ſtrains rehearſe
The glorious Author of the univerſe,
Who rules the winds, gives the vaſt ocean bounds,
And circumſcribes the floating worlds their rounds,
My ſoul ſhould overflow in ſongs of praiſe,
And my Creator's name inſpire my lays!

Sylvan Employments.

FROM ſcenes by nature plann'd for hermit life,*
Where peace might ſit, and ſmile at human ſtrife,
Ambition's frenzy, and the rage of wealth,
Enormous waſte of comfort, time and health;
To diſtant plains the friendly letter flies,
Which but a friend will riſque, a friend will prize;
To tell, I walk, I ride, I drink, I feed,
I ſleep, I wake, I vegetate, and read;
From hill to vale, from ſhade to ſun-ſhine ſtray,
And dream and loiter tedious life away.
I live a trifling, if not happy man,
Not as I would, but ſimply as I can,†
And when the pleaſures of the ſpirit fly,
An humble ſubſtitute the ſenſes try.

---

* Written in the Iſle of Wight; extracted from a letter to a friend in London.

† Every man who wiſhes to enjoy a country life without diſguſt, ſhould ſtudy to fill up his time with ſuch employments or innocent recreations, as may engage his attention without wearineſs, or exerciſe his body without fatigue. See the note in page 50.

An irregular Ode to Solitude.

HAIL! Solitude, the Muſes friend!
To thee I ſtring the tuneful lyre;
Do thou thy magic influence lend,
And wake devotion's hallow'd fire:
For thee I quit the city's ſtrife,
And ſeek the humbler ſcenes of life;
To ſoar on contemplation's wing,
And glow with rapture as I ſing.
See! Cynthia, empreſs of the night,
Emits a beam of glimmering light;
And, burſting through a ſable cloud,
Proclaims in Reaſon's ear aloud,
While rolling round her deſtin'd ſphere,
That God is acting every where:
Self-pleas'd, the grateful theme I'll fondly join,
And hail the Author, and his pow'r divine.

Oh! come Reflection, heaven-born maid,
And all thy wonted power diſplay;
Point out where I have erring ſtray'd,
And lead me from the devious way!
Thus taught by thee, unerring guide,
To ſhun the motly ſons of pride;
Whoſe minds have ever ſince their birth
Kept level with their mother Earth;

Whoſe

Whoſe ſouls, confin'd to Folly's ſhrine,
Can ſcarcely prove themſelves divine,
Till death obliquely throws the dart,
And wounds the victims to the heart,
Then, burſting from the tottering clay,
Each gently wings itſelf away,
And leaves behind a ſenſeleſs, mouldering clod,
To meet the vengeance of an angry God.

Then, while Reflection's ſober power
With me ſhall kindly deign to dwell,
Be mine the talk, each fleeting hour
Some pleaſing moral truth to tell;
And wak'd from life's fantaſtic dream,
Where mortals are not what they ſeem,
(But, skill'd in fraudful guile and art,
Deceive the eye, to win the heart;)
Let me forſake the treacherous crowd,
The rich, the poor, the mean, the proud,
To taſte the ſweets of Solitude,
Where ſeldom human ills intrude,
There mark where Virtue's ſons have trod,
And look through nature up to God;
Till, riſing far above terreſtrial toys,
The raptur'd ſoul foreſees eternal joys!

And thoſe, who by parental ties
Now check the Muſe's flights in vain,
Will, when they mount th' ætherial ſkies,
With rapture join the grateful ſtrain;

But

But now, untaught in claſſic lore,
Above their reach the Muſes ſoar:
A venal tribe! for pride, and wealth,
They barter Eaſe, Content, and Health;
Seek pleaſure in gay Folly's round,
Where nought but diſappointment's found;
Yet ſtill deceive themſelves with hope,
At random run, or blindly grope;
And, toſs'd on life's tempeſtuous ſea,
Are never what they wiſh to be;
Yet, ever anxious for the future day,
This, unimprov'd, ſteals unobſerv'd away!

But let me not at them repine;
Since, kindly, Heaven on me beſtows
A Genius ripening to divine,
A heart that with devotion glows;
But from another's ſeelings, learn
The wrong to ſhun, the right diſcern:
Grateful for Nature's frugal ſtore,
Below the rich, above the poor,
Contented paſs my future days,
Nor think that God's are partial ways.
If one enjoys a larger ſhare
Of bleſſings, while he's deſtin'd here,
'Tis but that he the more may grant
To thoſe who feel the hand of want:
This known, what farther can I wiſh to know!
Content's our greateſt happineſs below.

In

In theſe delightful ſylvan ſhades,
Where birds their evening carols ſing;
And riſing hills, and opening glades,
Diſplay the beauties of the ſpring;
Oft may I muſing ſteal along,
And join the ſweet, melodious ſong;
While Zephyr's gentle, winnowing gale,
Comes wafting fragrance from the vale;
The mingling ſweets promiſcuous riſe,
Perfuming Æther to the skies,
And nature to the ſenſes yields
Joys equal to the Elyſian fields.
Here, Genius! here thy tribute raiſe,
And tune to Heaven thy vocal lays;
Here freely range, or court the ſhady bower,
And ſtrive t'improve aright each paſſing hour.

A Summer's Noon.

PHŒBUS hath now reſum'd meridian height,
And ſhines abroad magnificently bright:
Beneath the ſhade ſee Colin with his Fair,
Where cooling zephyrs fan the noon-tide air.

Thus ſecluded in the bower,
Happy is the ſultry hour;
Innocence waits ev'ry bliſs,
What can be more ſweet than this.

Now the rural table's ſpread,
Sallad, beef, or barley-bread;
Health ſits ſmiling in each face,
While innocence their manners grace.

But the ſun retracts his ray,
Now to bus'neſs haſte away,
'Till the ev'ning ſhades advance,
Then again to ſong and dance.

Inſcription

Inſcription in an Hermitage at Anſley-Hall, in Warwickſhire.

I.

BENEATH this ſtony roof reclin'd.
I ſooth to peace my penſive mind:
And while, to ſhade my lowly cave,
Embowering elms their umbrage wave;
And while the maple diſh is mine,
The beechen cups, unſtain'd with wine:
I ſcorn the gay, licentious croud,
Nor heed the gems that deck the proud.

II.

Within my limits lone and ſtill,
The blackbird pipes in artleſs trill:
Faſt by my couch, congenial gueſt!
The wren has wove her moſſy neſt;
From buſy ſcenes, and brighter skies,
To lurk with innocence, ſhe flies;
Here hopes in ſafe repoſe to dwell,
Nor aught ſuſpects the ſylvan cell.

III.

At morn, I take my cuſtom'd round,
To mark how buds yon ſhrubby mound;

And every opening primroſe count,
That trimly paints my blooming mount:
Or, o'er the ſculptures, quaint and rude,
That grace my gloomy ſolitude,
I teach in winding wreaths to ſtray
Fantaſtic ivy's gadding ſpray.

IV.

At eve, within yon ſtudious nook,
I ope my braſs emboſſed book,
Pourtray'd with many a holy deed
Of martyrs, crown'd with heav'nly meed:
Then, as my taper waxes dim,
Chaunt, ere I ſleep, my meaſur'd hymn;
And, at the cloſe, the gleams behold
Of parting wings bedropt with gold.

V.

While ſuch pure joys my bliſs create,
Who but would ſmile at guilty ſtate?
Who but would wiſh his holy lot
In calm Oblivion's humble grot?
Who but would caſt his pomp away,
To take my ſtaff, and amice gray;
And to the world's tumultuous ſtage
Prefer the peaceful hermitage?

Ode to Retirement.

O Sweet Retirement! let me dwell
Within thy peaceful, humble cell,
And taſte thy joys ſerene;
Wrapt in thy ſolitary ſhade,
To me be Nature's works diſplay'd,
Within thy ſylvan ſcene.

Far! far remov'd from noiſe and ſtrife,
From all the giddy whirls of life,
Content and peace be mine;
Still let me ſeek the ſilent grove,
Sacred to ſolitude and love,
And worſhip at thy ſhrine.

Let not Ambition prompt the ſigh,
Nor Pleaſure's vain allurements try
Their flattering arts to pleaſe;
The fleeting phantom we purſue,
Tho' ever preſent to our view,
Deprives us of our peace.

Secur'd from Envy's poiſon'd dart,
That ſeeks to wound the gentle heart,
Invading its repoſe:
Unknown to Cenſure and to Fame,
No ſlanderous tongue detracts my name,
No heart with Envy glows.

Can ſtately palaces or halls,
Can midnight maſques or feſtive balls,
  Subſtantial bliſs impart?
Thoſe tranſient ſcenes, which charm the mind,
Ideal prove and unrefin'd,
  Corrupting of the heart.

The rural cot, the verdant field,
More true content and pleaſure yield,
  Than frolic mirth can give;
In careleſs, ſimple robes array'd,
Far happier is the village maid,
  Than they who wanton live.

One common fate we all muſt ſhare,
The grave, the gay, the young, the fair,
  Are haſt'ning to the tomb;
There undiſtinguiſh'd all muſt lie,
And for a long eternity
  Receive their final doom.

The Rural Wiſh.

OH! grant me kind Heaven! ſome peaceful retreat,
Above a thatch'd cottage, below a grand ſeat!
By a hill, from the bleak *Northern* blaſts ſtill defended;
By a warm *Southern* breeze at all ſeaſons befriended;
To the ſun's earlieſt rays the *front* windows be plac'd,
The back ones to catch his laſt ſmiles in the Weſt.

In the midſt of five acres I'd wiſh it to ſtand,
Laid out and improv'd by my own eye and hand:
The fourth part of that, on the front I'd beſtow,
The reſt all for pleaſure, and nothing for ſhow.

From the door of my garden I'd gently deſcend,
Where a river ſhould bound my domain at the end:
The fences beſide ſhould be nothing but quick;
All art I diſdain, and moſt of all, brick:
An elegant plainneſs ſhould reign thro' the whole,
For nature improv'd 's the delight of my ſoul.
On the banks of the ſtream I'd have two arbours plac'd,
With woodbines and roſes and jeſſamine grac'd;
From whence I an angle might careleſsly throw,
To catch the mute wanderers gliding below;

While my mind (not wholly to loſe ſo much time)
Is improv'd by ſome author, profound and ſublime.*

In this calm retreat may I ſpend all my days,
Unvex'd by the world, unappriz'd of its ways;
Forgotten of all, but my God, and the poor;
From folly, diſtraction, and envy ſecure;
And (if I may covet out a pleaſure ſo great)
May the kind Eloiſa ſtill bleſs my retreat!
Eloiſa! whoſe ſoul is as pure from all ſtain
As a new-fall'n lamb, or the ſnow on the plain;
In her charming converſe I'd wear out each day,
Together we'd walk, and we'd talk, or we'd pray—
And as the laſt bleſſing that either could crave,
Together lie down, and thus ſleep in one grave;
Together aſcend to the Regions above,
The Regions of Harmony, Pleaſure, and Love.

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* We cannot always enjoy the converſation of thoſe we love; there are many hours when the mind muſt retire into itſelf, and refer to its own treaſures for its ſupport. It is neceſſary, therefore, to form mental as well as ſocial connections; and as the firſt are the leaſt liable to be broken, they are beſt worth our cultivation.

Written

Lines written in a Garden.

FROM buſy ſcenes, with peace alone retired,
And the warm ray of gratitude inſpired,
For bleſſings paſt, and mercies yet to come,
Here let me praiſe my God, and fix my home!
With Iſaac, in the fields for grace implore,
With Moſes, in each buſh, the Lord adore!
His providence for all my wants provides,
His arm upholds me, and his right hand guides.
His breezes fan me in the noon-tide hours,
Where coolneſs walks amidſt my ſhades and bowers:
His bounty in the ſilver current flows,
Smiles in the bloſſoms, in the fruitage glows: *
His radiant finger gilds the vernal flow'rs,
Fed with his balm, and water'd with his ſhowers:
He bids the roſe its crimſon folds unlooſe,
And bluſh, refulgent, in the purple dews:
The lilly he arrays with ſpotleſs white,
Rich in its mantle or inwoven light;

* The ſpring affords, to a mind free from corroding care or boiſterous paſſion, an inexhauſted ſource of innocent enjoyments. The variety of pleaſing proſpects, and delightful ſcenes, formed by hills and dales, by fields and woods; the warbling of birds, whoſe chearful notes diſplay reviving joy; the ſatisfaction diſcovered by every animal at the growth of his food, and the mildneſs of the weather, give an air of gaiety to the face of things.

(Go, Solomon, and caſt thy gems aſide, *
Nor glory in thy poverty of pride)
The painted tribes their ſunny robes diſplay,
And lend a lucid ſoftneſs to the day.
Grateful, each flower to Heaven its incenſe pays,
And breathes its fragrant ſoul away in praiſe.
Oh, thither may they teach my ſoul to ſoar,
Confeſs my Maker, and his ſteps adore;
Contented let me live, ſubmiſſive die,
And hope a fairer Paradiſe on high!

---

* Matthew 6: 28: 29.

Sylvan Reflections.

[Written by a young Lady.]

WHAT ſoft delight the peaceful boſom warms,
When Nature, dreſt in all her vernal charms,
Around the beauteous landſcape ſmiles ſerene,
And crowns with every gift the lovely ſcene!
In every gift the Donor ſhines confeſt,
And heavenly bounty chears the grateful breaſt.
Now lovely verdure paints the laughing meads,
And o'er the hills wide waving plenty ſpreads;
Where woodbines climb, diſpenſing odours round,
There ſmiles the pink, with humble beauties crown'd;
And while the flowers their various charms diſcloſe,
Queen of the garden, ſhines the bluſhing roſe.
The fragrant tribes diſplay their ſweeteſt bloom,
And every gentle whiſper breathes perfume.

But this delightful ſeaſon muſt decay,
The year rolls on, and ſteals its charms away.
How ſwift the gaily tranſient pleaſure flies!
Stern winter comes, and every beauty dies.
The fleeting bliſs, while penſive thought deplores,
The mind in ſearch of nobler pleaſure ſoars;
And ſeeks a fairer Paradiſe on high,
Where beauties riſe and bloom that never die.

There winter ne'er invades with hoſtile arms,
But everlaſting ſpring diſplays her charms;
Celeſtial fragrance fills the bleſt retreats,
Unknown to Earth in all her flow'ry ſweets.
Enraptur'd there the mind unweary'd roves,
Thro' flow'ry paths, and ever verdant groves;

Such bliſsful groves not happy Eden knew, *
Nor fancy's boldeſt pencil ever drew.
No ſun departing, leaves the ſcene to mourn,
To droop and languiſh for his kind return;
Or with ſhort viſits chears the wintry hours,
And faintly ſmiles on Nature's drooping powers.
But there the Deity himſelf diſplays
The bright effulgence of his glorious rays;
Immortal life and joy his ſmile beſtows,
And boundleſs bliſs for ever, ever flows.

---

* It is but half poſſeſſion not to underſtand that happineſs which we poſſeſs; a foundation of good ſenſe and a cultivation of learning are required to give a ſeaſoning to retirement, and make us taſte the bleſſing.---Eden was not made for beaſts, though they were ſuffered to live in it; but for their maſter, who ſtudied God in the work of his creation. Neither could the devil have been happy there with all his knowledge, for he wanted innocence to make him ſo. He brought envy, malice, and ambition into Paradiſe, which ſoured to him the ſweetneſs of the place.

Such only can enjoy the country who are capable of thinking, when they are there, and have left their diſſolute paſſions behind them in the town. Then they are rightly prepared for ſolitude, and ſolitude is preared for them.

Rural Contemplations.

[Written in the Spring.]

From brightening fields of Æther fair diſcloſed,
Child of the Sun, refulgent Summer comes,
In pride of youth, and felt through Nature's depth:
He comes attended by the ſultry hours,
And ever-fanning breezes, on his way;
While, from his ardent look, the turning Spring
Averts her bluſhful face; and earth and ſkies
All ſmiling, to his hot dominion leaves. THOMSON.

IN the blooming month of May the Spring glows with "all the mixtures of colorific radiance;" but, before the expiration of June, that ſeaſon will commence, when opening beauty, and increaſing variety, will be ſucceeded by the more uniform ſcenes of maturity and perfection.

The ſummer ſeaſon is ſo diſtinguiſhed by an uniformity of character, that the great Poet of the Seaſons * has comprized the whole of his deſcription within the limits of a ſingle day. To give importance, moreover, to a ſeaſon, in other reſpects ſo unproductive of ſubject, his muſe has ſpread her flight to the torrid zone, and enriched her landſcapes with foreign beauties and exotic wonders.

Nature, in our temperate regions, appears now to have nearly finiſhed her annual work. Something of her variety ſhe begins to loſe in this ſeaſon.

* J. Thomſon.

Nothing, indeed, can be more beautiful than the verdure of the orchards and woods, but the ſhades or hues which they exhibit are no longer ſo agreeable. The meadows begin to whiten, and the flowers that adorn them are mowed down. The corn gradually aſſumes a yellow hue, and the colours that decorate the rural ſcene are no longer ſo numerous. How lately did the glowing beauty and variety of theſe, with the notes, as various, of a multitude of birds, diſplay at once all the charms of novelty, and inſpire inexpreſſible delight!

It is in the novelty of objects, indeed, in their appearing at leaſt to be new and uncommon, that the more exquiſite enjoyment of them conſiſts. Novelty excites a pleaſure in the imagination, becauſe it ſtrikes the ſoul with an agreeable ſurpriſe, gratifies its curioſity, and gives it an idea of which it was not poſſeſſed before. It contributes, therefore, to vary human life: it tends to divert and refreſh the mind, and to take off that ſatiety of which we are apt to complain in the entertainments to which we are conſtantly accuſtomed; it is that which gives its charm to variety, where the mind is every inſtant called off to ſomething new, and the attention not ſuffered to dwell too long, and waſte itſelf, on any particular object. Novelty, moreover, improves whatever is beautiful and pleaſing, and makes it afford to the mind a double entertainment.

Hence we may deduce the reaſon why the groves, and fields, and meadows, which, at any ſeaſon of the year are delightful to the view, are never more ſo than in the opening of the Spring, when they are all new and freſh, with their firſt gloſs upon them, and not yet too familiar to the eye. But in the Summer, in proportion as we advance towards Autumn,

Autumn, theſe pleaſing effects inſenſibly decreaſe; the ſong of the nightingale is no longer heard; and that favourite enjoyment of the country, a walk through fields of verdure, becomes inconvenient and unpleaſing, on account of the great heat, which ſometimes, particularly at noon, prevails.

Yet Summer has ſtill inexpreſſible charms, and exhibits proofs every day of the unbounded goodneſs of the Great Creator. It is that ſeaſon of felicity in which he diſpenſes his bleſſings more abundantly to every living creature. Nature, after having reanimated and enlivened us by all the pleaſures of the Spring, is inceſſantly employed, during the Summer, to provide thoſe enjoyments which are moſt agreeable to the ſenſes, to facilitate the means of ſubſiſtence, and to excite in our breaſts the correſpondent ſentiments of gratitude and love.

I ſhall here beg leave to preſent my readers with the moſt ſtriking parts of a Summer's day, which, I will ſelect from Thomſon's celebrated poem on the *Seaſons*.

MORNING.

When now no more th' alternate *Twins* are fir'd,
And *Cancer* reddens with the Solar blaze,
Short is the doubtful empire of the Night,
And ſoon, obſervant of approaching Day,
The meek-ey'd Morn appears, mother of dews.
At firſt faint gleaming in the dappled eaſt:
And, from before the luſtre of her face,
White break the clouds away. With quicken'd ſtep,
Brown Night retires: Young Day pours in apace,
And opens all the lawny proſpect wide.

The dripping rock, the mountain's miſty top,
Swell on the ſight, and brighten with the dawn.
Blue, thro' the duſk, the ſmoaking currents ſhine;
And from the bladed field the fearful hare
Limps, aukward; while along the foreſt glade
The wild deer trip, and often turning gaze
At early paſſenger. Muſic awakes
The native voice of undiſſembled joy;
And thick around the woodland hymns ariſe.

* * * * * *

But yonder comes the powerful King of Day,
Rejoicing in the eaſt. The leſſening cloud,
The kindling azure, and the mountain brow
Illum'd with fluid gold, his near approach
Betoken glad. Lo! now, apparent all,
Aſlant the dew-bright earth, and colour'd air,
He looks in boundleſs majeſty abroad;
And ſheds the ſhining day, that burniſh'd plays
On rocks, and hills, and towers, and wandering ſtreams,
High gleaming from afar.

FORENOON.

Now, flaming up the heavens, the potent Sun
Melts into limpid air the high-rais'd clouds,
And morning fogs, that hover'd round the hills
In party-colour'd bands; till wide unveil'd
The face of Nature ſhines, from where earth ſeems
Far ſtretch'd around, to meet the bending ſphere.

NOON.

NOON.

'Tis raging noon; and, vertical, the Sun
Darts on the head direct his forceful rays.
O'er heav'n and earth, far as the ranging eye
Can ſweep, a dazzling deluge reigns; and all,
From pole to pole, is undiſtinguiſh'd blaze.
In vain the ſight, dejected to the ground,
Stoops for relief; thence hot aſcending ſteams
And keen reflection pain. Deep to the root
Of vegetation parch'd, the cleaving fields
And ſlippery lawn an arid hue diſcloſe,
Blaſt Fancy's blooms, and whither even the ſoul.
Echo no more returns the chearful ſound
Of ſharpening ſcythe: the mower ſinking heaps
O'er him the humid hay, with flowers perfum'd;
And ſcarce a chirping graſs-hopper is heard
Thro' the dumb mead. Diſtreſsful Nature pants.
The very ſtreams look languid from afar;
Or, thro' th' unſhelter'd glade, impatient, ſeem
To hurl into the covert of the grove.

AFTERNOON.

he Sun has loſt his rage! His downward orb
Shoots nothing now but animating warmth,
And vital luſtre; that, with various ray,
Lights up the clouds, thoſe beauteous robes of heaven,
Inceſſant roll'd into romantic ſhapes,
The dream of waking Fancy! Broad below,

Cover'd

Cover'd with ripening fruits, and ſwelling faſt
Into the perfect year, the pregnant earth
And all her tribes rejoice. Now the ſoft hour
Of walking comes; for him who lonely loves
To ſeek the diſtant hills, and there converſe
With Nature.

EVENING.

Low walks the Sun, and broadens by degrees,
Juſt o'er the verge of day. The ſhifting clouds
Aſſembled gay, a richly gorgeous train,
In all their pomp attend his ſetting throne.
Air, earth, and ocean ſmile immenſe. And now,
As if his weary chariot ſought the bowers
Of Amphitrite and her tending nymphs,
(So Grecian fable ſung) he dips his orb;
Now half immers'd; and now a golden curve
Gives one bright glance, then total diſappears.

* * * * * *

Confeſs'd from yonder ſlow-extinguiſh'd clouds,
All æther ſoftening, ſober Evening takes
Her wonted ſtation in the middle air,
A thouſand *ſhadows* at her beck. Firſt *this*
She ſends on earth; then *that* of deeper dye
Steals ſoft behind; and then a *deeper* ſtill,
In circle following circle, gathers round,
To cloſe the face of things. A freſher gale
Begins to wave the woods, and ſtir the ſtream,
Sweeping with ſhadowy guſt the fields of corn;

While

While the quail clamours for his running mate.
Wide o'er the thiſtly lawn, as ſwells the breeze,
A whitening ſhower of vegetable down
Amuſive floats. The kind impartial care
Of Nature nought diſdains: thoughtful to feed
Her loweſt ſons, and clothe the coming year,
From field to field the feather'd ſeed ſhe wings.

NIGHT.

Among the crooked lanes, on every hedge,
The glow-worm lights his gem; and, thro' the dark,
A moving radiance twinkles. Evening yields
The world to Night; not in her winter robe
Of maſſy Stygian woof, but looſe array'd
In mantle dun. A faint erroneous ray,
Glanc'd from th' imperfect ſurfaces of things,
Flings half an image on the ſtraining eye;
While wavering woods, and villages, and ſtreams,
And rocks, and mountain-tops, that long retain'd
Th' aſcending gleam, are all one ſwimming ſcene,
Uncertain if beheld. Sudden to heaven
Thence weary viſion turns; where, leading ſoft
The ſilent hours of love, with pureſt ray
Sweet Venus ſhines; and from her genial riſe,
When day-light ſickens till it ſprings afreſh,
Unrivall'd reigns the faireſt lamp of night.

Theſe principal parts of a Summer's day, but more particularly, Morning, Evening, and Night, have been the favourite theme of poets, from the moſt remote antiquity. Each has ſomething pictureſque

pictureſque and beautiful that affects every ſenſe with unſpeakable pleaſure; particularly the ſight, which is the moſt perfect and moſt delightful of all our ſenſes; which fills the mind with the greateſt variety of ideas; converſes with its objects at the remoteſt diſtance; and continues the longeſt in action without being tired or ſatiated with its proper enjoyments. Beſides the glowing colours of the flowers, and the ſtill enlivening verdure of the woods; the eye beholds an innumerable quantity of fruits, which, by virtue of the ſecret laws of Nature, grow in our fields and gardens, and which after thus delighting the ſenſe of viſion, may be gathered and preſerved, to contribute to our ſubſiſtence.

The flowers preſent to our ſenſes the moſt agreeable diverſity: we not only admire the richneſs of their attire, but the fecundity of Nature in the numberleſs ſpecies of them. What variety too, what beauty in every plant, from the lowly moſs to the towering oak! If we wander from flower to flower, the eye is ſtill unſatiated with the view. If we aſcend the higheſt mountains, pierce into the midnight depth of the groves, or deſcend into the ſpacious vale, we diſcover new beauties ſpread around in wonderful profuſion. Of the infinity of objects that ſtrike the eye, each is different from the other; but each has in itſelf ſufficient beauty to attract and to fix our attention: yonder a diſtant proſpect, terminated by a beautiful horizon; here the rich and variegated landſcape; there herds of cattle and flocks of ſheep; here flowers and plants, "beyond the power of botaniſt to number up their tribes." If we lift up our eyes, we behold the blue concave, refulgent and ſerene. Adverting to the landſcape around, the eye, juſt dazzled by celeſtial

celeſtial radiance, is cheered again by the bright verdure of the fields;

. . . . . By thee, gay Green!
Thou ſmiling Nature's univerſal robe!
United light and ſhade! where the ſight dwells
With growing ſtrength, and ever-new delight.

Nor is the ſenſe of *hearing* unaffected by the univerſal charm: it is ſtill enraptured by the muſic of the woods. The murmurings too of the brook, or of the ſilver waves which the river rolls in its majeſtic courſe, are pleaſing to the ear. The *taſte* is gratified by the early fruits that ripen in this ſeaſon, and which, excluſive of their pleaſing flavour, have the moſt cooling, ſalutary virtues. The ſenſe of *ſmelling* is delighted with the fragrance diffuſed from all around. In a word, a thouſand objects exerciſe our ſenſes, and excite our ſenſibility. The flocks and herds, nouriſhed by the laviſh hand of Nature, crop the wholeſome herb, to afford us nutriment and clothing. Kindly rains bedew the ſoil with plenty, and open new ſources of thankſgiving. The tufted trees and bowery thickets refreſh us with their welcome ſhade. Whatever we *ſee*, and whatever we *hear*; whatever can delight the *taſte*, or the ſenſe of *ſmelling*, augments the number of our pleaſures, and contributes to felicity.

But a view of the creation at this ſeaſon is ſtill more enchanting, when conſidered as a ſource of pleaſure to the underſtanding, which diſcovers what the ſenſes cannot attain: it contemplates beauty, harmony, variety, and pleaſure unperceived before. In every object of Nature, it beholds the Great Creator of all, the Source of Life and Beauty, the Author of every Good. Inſpired by ſcenes, in which infinite

infinite wiſdom and unbounded goodneſs are inceſſantly conſpicuous, with what rapture will the Contemplative Philoſopher, the genuine ſon of Nature, exalt his voice to heaven, in the glowing language of gratitude and adoration. "Yes!" he may exclaim, "Thou Beſt of Beings! how unutterable is Thy goodneſs! I behold Thee in all Thy wondrous works." The radiant orb of day, and, in the ſilent night, the ſilver moon, and all the ſtars, the life-infuſing ſuns of other worlds, proclaim the Great Omnipotent.

In the balſamic fragrance of the flowers I behold that incenſe riſe, which, in mingled clouds, they roll ſoft to Thee, "whoſe Sun exalts, whoſe breath perfumes them, and whoſe pencil paints." In the delicious fruits, I taſte Thy unconfined and unexhauſted bounty. Whatever pleaſures I enjoy by the kind communication of my ſenſes, ſhall recall me to Thee, as the object of devout and fervent aſpiration; and Thou, moſt adorable Being, who gaveſt me theſe ſenſations, wilt thus exalt and ennoble them. * While I am ſtill intent in contemplating theſe material beauties, I ſoar inſenſibly to the moſt ſublime objects, to the centre of all perfection. Yes! Thou Good Supreme, Thee I invoke, Thee alone adore! To Thee this lonely ſpot, this pleaſing ſolitude, theſe rural thoughts are ſacred, while thus I meditate on Thy

---

* The earth's thy footſtool and the heav'ns thy throne,
All creatures, Thee their great Creator own;
Trees, herbs, and flow'rs thy handy works proclaim,
And birds melodious warble forth thy name;
Snow, hail, and rain obey thine awful nod,
While all creation echos THOU ART GOD.

RURAL CHRISTIAN.

Thy works, and contemplate the beauties which all reſolve in Thee, Thou Source and Principle of Perfection."

Such are the natural effuſions of the Contemplative Philoſopher, when his eye wanders over the beauties of the Summer. And what pleaſure and ſerenity do ſuch meditations inſpire! Can any terreſtrial enjoyments be placed in competition with the manly ſources of delight which they afford? Can the wiſe and virtuous man be ever ſatiated with ſuch themes? No: were he to witneſs the revolution of a thouſand Summers, he would ſtill diſcover new objects of admiration, and new ſubjects of praiſe and adoration.

For me, when I forget the darling theme,
Whether the bloſſom blows, the Summer ray
Ruſſets the plain, inſpiring Autumn gleams,
Or Winter riſes in the blackening Eaſt,
Be my tongue mute, may Fancy paint no more,
And, dead to joy, forget my heart to beat!

The Sylvan Recluſe. An Elegy.

I.

TIR'D with the ſplendid toils of public life,
Phylenor ſought true happineſs to find;
And far beyond the reach of noiſy ſtrife
Retir'd, and left the buſy world behind.

II.

In the deep boſom of a grove he found
A grot, by nature form'd in days of old;
Thick arching oaks, high o'er the manſion frown'd,
Beneath, a babbling brook its current roll'd.

III.

From winds defended by the ſpreading trees,
Whoſe ſhade in ſummer skreens the piercing ray;
In winter ſhelter from the northern breeze,
And heat and cold's alternate rage allay.

IV.

To this retreat, *the ſage* with joy withdrew,
Nor felt a wiſh for aught he left behind;
Here, taſting pleaſures, pure, refin'd, and new,
To contemplation he his ſoul reſign'd.

V.

In ſolitude the circling hours he ſpent,
No cares corroding *wound* his peaceful breaſt,

But,

But, with the heaven-deſcended nymph *Content*,
His days he paſs'd in unmoleſted reſt.

VI.

No more *ambition* fires his peaceful mind,
The voice of *fame* no longer charms his ear;
No more to pomp and noiſy mirth inclin'd,
Or bound to wealth by golden chains of care.

VII.

In this ſweet haunt, where *wiſdom* loves to dwell,
To her inſtruction he attention pays,
With her delighted, in his humble cell,
He learns her precept's, and repeats her lays.

VIII.

Each morn awak'd by Philomela's lays,
Ere ſol with crimſon decks the purple eaſt,
He riſes vig'rous, and his tribute pays,
While joy ſublime dilates his grateful breaſt.

IX.

With pure devotion riſing in his ſoul,
The *Lord of nature* humbly he adores;
While in his breaſt ſerene reflections roll,
The various ſcenes of nature he explores.

X.

The circling ſeaſons he obſerves with care,
And marks the progreſs of the riſing ſpring;
How ſpicy gales perfume the genial air;
How flow'rs expand, and birds harmonious ſing.

XI. Each

XI.

Each plant and ſhrub, that roſe around his cell,
He prun'd and faſhion'd, juſt as fancy led;
Their *names* and *natures* none could better tell,
Or why they tow'ring roſe, or widely ſpread.

XII.

The tuneful tribes, that vocal made the grove,
By him were taught t' aſſemble at his call,
Perch on his hand, or round the grot to rove,
Or fill with muſic ſweet his rural hall.

XIII.

Theſe he would teach to imitate the ſound
(In notes articulate) of human ſong,
Which made the grove with harmony reſound,
And eve's cool hours delightfully prolong.

XIV.

Sometimes ſublimer ſtudies claim'd his care.
To ſearch the labours of the illuſtrious dead,
"*To ſoar with Plato to th' empyreal ſphere,*"
Or trace each ſcience to its fountain head.

XV.

In *Locke*'s profound, or *Milton*'s heaven-taught page,
In *Pope*'s ſweet numbers, or in *Johnſon*'s thought;
Or where Bellona's ſons in *Homer* rage,
To elevate his ſoul Phylenor ſought.

XVI. Fair

XVI.

Fair bloom'd the flowrets round his peaceful cot,
The vi'let, primroſe, and their kindred train,
Each join'd t' adorn this calm, ſequeſter'd ſpot,
And ſweetly flouriſh on the ſmiling plain.

XVII.

Contentment here with meek-ey'd peace reſides,
And joy, and temp'rance, pitch their tents around;
While every riſing thought pure *Virtue* guides,
And harmleſs pleaſure frolics o'er the ground.

XVIII.

'Twas here Phylenor found ſubſtantial joy,
Joy unexperienc'd by the ſons of care;
Unmix'd with pain, untemper'd with alloy,
His days were cheerful, and his evening fair.

XIX.

Thus, till the lamp of life thro' age expir'd,
In peace the golden moments wing'd their way;
And then his ſoul, with heav'nly ardor fir'd,
Sought the bright regions of eternal day.

Deſcription of a Tempeſtuous Morning.

THE morning is o'erſpread with low'ring gloom,
The breaking day appears the day of doom;
The ſun ſeems ſluggiſh, and as loth to riſe,
Obliquely gleaming through th' envelop'd ſkies;
His diſk by fits reveals a fiery red;
Deſcending clouds involve the mountain's head;
Hoarſe thunder rumbling growls; the horrid glare
Of forked lightning rends the duſky air;
By flaſhing ſtarts a ratt'ling ſhower deſcends;
The ſturdy oaks the ruſhing tempeſt bends:
The birds their late abodes explore again;
And flocks and herds, mixt with th' affrighted ſwain,
Hie to thick coverts from th' inclement plain.
Thus is the mind, which paſſion's force obeys;
Foul luſt, or wild imagination ſways;
Theſe its ſerener pleaſures ruffling ſpoil,
And all the gifts of heav'n and nature ſoil.

Deſcription of a Fine Morning.

NOW glimm'ring light the purpled ſkies diſplay,
Aurora bluſhing uſhers in the day;
The ſun's refulgent rays remotely ſpread,
And ſweetly gilds each lofty mountain's head;
The waking ſwains their labours now renew,
While meadows gliſten with the pearly dew;
The choriſters, their neſts relinquiſh'd, rove,
The field reviſit! reſalute the grove!
The riſing day their notes regaling ſeem,
And join the murmurs of the purling ſtream;
On odoriferous wings the Zephyrs fly;
Joy fills each heart! and pleaſure ev'ry eye!
Fair ſcenes appearing to the raviſh'd view,
The whole creation ſeems reviv'd and new.

In rural ſeats, ſo lovely and ſerene,
Health is, and truth in golden times was ſeen;
Such are the beauties of th' unblemiſh'd mind
(Surpaſſing all the charms of woman-kind!)
And ſuch, ev'n ſuch (could we behold her here)
So fair and tempting, *Virtue* would appear.

The Hermit and Ruined Abbey. A Fragment.

The cloud-capt towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The ſolemn temples, the great globe itſelf,
Yea, all which it inherit, ſhall diſſolve;
And, like the baſeleſs fabric of a viſion,
Leave not a wreck behind!

SHAKESPEAR'S TEMPEST.

DEEP in a deſart's dull ſequeſter'd gloom,
In infant time a reverend Derviſe trod;
To count his ſands, deliberate his doom,
His path was nature, and his pillow God.

In youth he learnt the world was truly vain,
That coy contentment ſeldom ſojourn'd there;
He fled the world from paſſion and from pain,
In ſilence ſought himſelf and found the Fair.

He learnt, that pleaſure was a ſpecious theme;
He learnt, that health did not to gold belong;
He learnt, that love was all a glitt'ring dream,
Friendſhip a farce, ſincerity a ſong.

He felt the abject poverty of pride,
He found philanthropy a fabled fair;
That fraud to honeſty was near ally'd,
Treach'ry a trade, and piety a pray'r.

The

The court, the camp, the ſenate-houſe he ſought,
Solv'd ev'ry ſcience, each refinement woo'd;
Still peace deny'd a patronage, a thought,
Who tunes her heavenly harp in ſolitude.

Till taught that life was darkneſs and diſtreſs,
A doubt, a breath, a parodox, a ſpan;
An antique abbey form'd his lone receſs
From vice, from woe, from vanity and man.

Round where this rude religious relic ſtood,
Grim deſolation dull dominion kept;
In mournful murmurs ooz'd a ſleepy flood,
Which oziers ſighing ſooth'd, while willows wept.

Near proud pilaſtres nodding to their fall,
Stupendous ſtones in ſhatter'd fragments lay;
Stooping to duſt the venerable wall,
In wintry veſt was vaniſhing away.

In vain the ivy claſp'd with fond embrace
The turret tott'ring on the time-ſtruck tow'r;
The frowning fabric bowing to its baſe,
Obedient own'd the perſecuting pow'r.

Brave fretted roofs, that lately ſcal'd the ſky,
The aged architrave and ſculptur'd frize,
Each hoary honour trembled from on high,
Each moſs-clad moulding quiv'ring with the breeze.

No pealing anthem ſhook the antient pile,
A ſacred ſilence reign'd ſupreme around;

Save when ſome ruin woke the ecchoing iſle,
Each dreary vault rehears'd the ſullen ſound.

Save when the owl, of melancholy mein,
In midnight mop'd the horrid hours along,
Diſturb'd by fits the ſadly ſolemn ſcene,
Hooting her ſavage ſolitary ſong.

Oft when the moon, pale poliſhing the night,
Thro' ev'ry chink a languid luſtre ſhed;
Calm contemplation would the ſage invite,
To learn the *living* lectures of the dead.

Death's clay-cold *college*, one poor *claſs* ſupply'd,
In ſpeculation each *degree* he took,
His *muſe* was virtue, wiſdom was his guide,
Each tomb a *tutor*, and each bone a *book*.

Huge fractur'd arches, crazy caverns deep,
Where mutt'ring winds in growling accents talk,
Where dewy damps, and pois'nous vapours weep,
Imperfect ſpells, and uncouth whiſpering walk.

Where once the chiſſel breath'd the bold deſign,
The ſculptor's pride and adoration too;
Vile toad-ſtools ſprout, and noxious adders twine,
And ſculls and coffins glare confeſs'd to view.

There wrapt in thought, by flames ſeraphic fir'd,
His kindling heart would thus in duſt adore;
O thou whoſe hallow'd breath my ſoul inſpir'd:
A proſtrate worm. *Cetera deſunt*. . . . . .

Solitary

Solitary Reflections.

O loſt to virtue, loſt to manly thought,
Loſt to the noble ſallies of the ſoul!
Who think it ſolitude to be alone.

YOUNG.

HAIL ſacred ſolitude! whoſe charms invite
The meditative mind to ſoar above
The falſe fantaſtic glories of the world.
Hail contemplation! whoſe inſpiring power
Exalts the ſoul, that fain would wander far,
Far from the ſphere, to ſcan the works of God;
Gives her an inlet to futurity,
And points the path to her eternal home.
Far from the public haunts of men I'll ſeek
Some wild ſequeſter'd ſolitary ſhade,
Unknown to public fame, and meditate
The ſolemn myſt'ries of Omnipotence.
And when the morning ſun adorns the sky,
I'll watch the feather'd people of the grove,
Flit from their happy homes to welcome in
The new-born day; ſee them aſcend aloft
The ſpacious element, and warble forth
The univerſal hymn. *

* See the Hymn at the end of Thomſon's Seaſons.

The ſhepherd quits his lowly thatch'd abode,
No cares of life intrude upon his thoughts,
But forth he ſeeks his ſcatter'd fleecy fold,
And re-aſſumes with joy his deſtin'd charge.
The lowing herd from o'er the diſtant plains,
Slowly advancing to the village farm,
Diverſifies the variegated rural ſcene;
To the field the laborious huſbandman
Repairs with implements of induſtry,
While all around him harmony ſubſiſts.

When night in ſolemn ſable ſuit approaches,
Nor aught is heard thro' Æther's ſilent ſpace,
Save Philomela's ſoft melodious ſtrains, †
Who penſive ſits and ſings the gloom away;
Then let me ſeek ſome holy hermit's cell,
Within whoſe hallow'd reverend age-worn walls,
Deep contemplation holds her ſacred court;
Secluded from the world's diſcordant ſcenes,
There may my ſoul hold converſe with the dead,
Whoſe mute preceptors teach us to be wiſe.

† The Nightingale.

The Return of Summer.

[By an unlettered rural Swain.]

AT laſt the irkſome winter's o'er,
Boreas has forgot to roar;
Now peaceful, mild, and ſtill,
The floods, releas'd from captive chains,
No nipping froſts, or marbled plains,
No ſnows the vallies fill.

Sol ſhines refulgent from on high,
Now Nature lays her mourning by,
And vernal beauties riſe;
His radiant hand at early dawn,
Leads on the purple veſted morn,
And gilds the azure skies.

See ſpring appears with pleaſing mein,
With flowrets crown'd, and rob'd in green,
And all her charms unfolds;
The daiſies ſmile, and ſweet pimroſe,
The violet, anemone, hyacinth, blows,
And cowſlips ting'd with gold.

The birds rejoice, the lambkins play,
The tow'ring larks awake the day,
Sweet Philomela ſings;

The linnet ſwells his downy throat,
The thruſh bids Echo learn his note;
Hark, how the valley rings!

To grace our climes the ſwallow flies,
And leaves hot Africk's ſtifling skies,
To breathe a milder air;
Unerring inſtinct marks her flights
On Albion's white-cliff coaſt ſhe lights,
And tells us Summer's near.

Obſerve the emmet tug and ſweat,
And ſpare no toil, though ne'er ſo great,
Each nerve does freely ſtrain;
Heav'n's hid this wiſdom in her heart,
While Summer laſts, to act her part,
And ſave each ſcatter'd grain.

The buſy bee, to ſtore her cell,
Burſts from her ſtraw-built citadel,
Now Nature ſmiles around;
Explores each valley, hill, and bow'r,
Collects her ſweets from ev'ry flower
That variegates the ground.

The glitt'ring flies, of countleſs forms,
As uſual, in unnumber'd ſwarms,
Their dazzling pomp diſpay;
When on the ſolar beam they ride,
Not Sheba's queen, in all her pride,
Could boaſt ſuch robes as they.

Each virgin morn freſh charms engage,
New beauties bloom on every hedge,
And every brake adorn;
Heav'ns bounties all around are ſeen,
Rich paſture clothes the ſmiling green,
Creation ſeems new born.

The glories of the ſpangl'd meads,
Wild hills, rock, floods, and ſylvan ſhades,
Attract the gazing ſight;
If Heav'n permits, their charms I'll view,
When Phœbus ſips the balmy dew,
With wonder and delight.

I'll climb ſome hill or mountain top,
Here Contemplation calls me up,
And here the gentle breeze,
Brings health and vigour on each gale,
When Zephyr fans the blooming vale,
And plays among the trees.

Look round on valley, hill, and plain,
This outſtretch'd, ample, vaſt domain,
And find each part agree,
In ſilent eloquence, to raiſe
The mind to the great Maker's praiſe,
Our bounteous Deity.

Was it blind Chance, or ſtupid Fate,
This beauteous order did create;
And uſe with beauty join?

The blazing day, night's ſilent hour,
The meaneſt plant, the humbleſt flower,
Proclaim a hand Divine.

Thus, when I walk the verdant fields,
And climb the gently riſing hills.
Or wander through the grove;
My Maker in each ſcene I trace,
And find his goodneſs in each place
Invite the ſoul to love.

The Hermitage.

[Written at Caſtle-Hill, the Seat of Lord Forteſcue.]

ALL hail, ye ſhades!—and thou, lone, moſſy cell,
Where ſweet remembrance hovers o'er the ſcene
Of former joys; and fancy wakes the ſprings
Of new delight: I fondly greet you. Here,
Eſcap'd from Folly's empire, and the tedious round
Of idle pleaſure, the excurſive mind
At freedom wanders. Thro' the gloom that ſpreads
Around this lov'd retreat, Truth darts its ray,
And opes to Wiſdom's eye its ſacred ſtores.
Here Contemplation dwells; by her inſpir'd
My thoughts ſoar upwards. Hope's bright wings ſupport
Their ſteady flight, far into diſtant worlds;
And Faith adores what Reaſon cannon ſcan.

No treachery here in Virtue's ſober guiſe,
Framing its pliant features to the look
Of Truth and Candour, plots its dark deſigns
And ſmiles ambiguous. Envy lurks not here,
Rolling her baleful eyes with eager ſpite,
To blaſt fair Innocence. The ſcorpion-tongue
Of Slander (Envy's curs'd aſſociate!)
Awakes no jealous fears, nor wounds the peace
Of unſuſpecting Truth with Love united,

But

But barr'd theſe hallow'd ſhades, this calm retreat,
Joins in the diſcord of the noiſy world,
And charms the groſſer ear untaught to feel
The gentler melody of Candour's voice.

No flatt'rer here to ſoothing accents tunes
His tale ſeductive, while the liſt'ning ear
Conveys the poiſon to the yielding heart.
No idle ſophiſt, ſcorning common ſenſe,
And Nature's plainer truths: no diſputant,
Skill'd in the ſtrife of words, here tortures reaſon—
Refining—and refining till they loſe
* *Matter* and *Spirit* too; and in the maze
Of empty ſpeculation, loſe themſelves!

And ye who boaſt of Heav'n's firſt favours,
As if ſelected from the world's wide range,
Thoſe favours were your own, and none but you
Shar'd Heav'n's friendſhip:—come not hither,
This placid ſhade ſuits not your turbid darkneſs.
No! for Charity is here: and Hope
That knows no ſelfiſh, no *ſectarian* wiſh,
Here opes its brightening eye on ALL creation,
Till the few ſpots, whoſe partial ſhades appall
The timid mind, or ſwell the bigot's rage,
Melt in the general blaze, and diſappear.

Dear

* The controverſy ſet on foot by Dr. Prieſtley's Diſquiſitions, is here alluded to.

Dear ſcenes, which ſmit my youthful fancy, hail!
In riper years I ſeek your friendly haunts,
Or rove, with ſteps unlimited, to feaſt
The eager eye with nature's ſofter charms,
By art embelliſh'd, and by taſte refin'd.
And as I wander o'er the verdant lawn,
Or ſeek the calm receſſes of the grove,
Fondly I liſten to the ſoothing ſtrains
Which Nature warbles thro' the wood-lark's throat;
Or on the bank, where glides the gentle ſtream,
I ſing my moral lay; or, ſilent, muſe
On life's meand'ring current as it flows
" To the vaſt ocean of Eternity."

The Diſpoſition of a Flower Garden.

IF Nature in her dreſs is ſimply neat,
'Tis Art which makes her beauteouſly complete.
View the *parterre*, where *Flora*'s beauties riſe;
Are there defects? Art ever theſe ſupplies.

Firſt chooſe a ſoil, where dryneſs moſt prevails,
Here of ſucceſs your labour ſeldom fails.
Let loam and gravel o'er the whole be ſpread,
To form the walks, and raiſe the flowery bed.
If near a river's ſide your ground ſhould lie,
The proſpect ſwells, luxuriant to the eye.
Where this is wanting, forth let ſprings be drawn;
Springs, which in ponds, diverſify the lawn.
To theſe, the fountain add, to give delight,
Which, nimbly tow'ring, glitters on the ſight.
Conſider, where the ſun's full heat ſhould fall,
And where 'tis right to have no ſun at all.
Some part you'll find ſhould open be and free,
Others encircled by the ſhady tree.
Would you have fruits to gratify the taſte?
Raiſe a ſouth wall: let nothing run to waſte.
With circumſpection cultivate the vine,
On which the ſun can never too much ſhine.
Labour and care will anſwer every e d,
And kind *Pomona* will your pains befriend.

Some

Some in their gardens coſtly ſtatues place,
Here to hide faults, and there t' impart a grace;
If to poſition apt there's no regard,
Statues look better in the ſculptor's yard.
That you with leiſure may ſurvey the ſpot,
Contrive ſome temple, ſummer-room, or grot;
Where all the parts may at one view be ſeen,
And Fancy revel o'er the bliſsful ſcene.
Here oft retire; here ſhun the noontide heat;
Conſult th' *hiſtoric* page in this retreat.
There read how *Atticus*, *Lucellus* bold,
Alcinous, and *Semiramis* of old,
The wiſe *Corycian*, prais'd in Maro's ſong,
And they who've ſought life's comforts to prolong;
In gardens paſs'd the leiſure of their days,
And rural ſcenes preferr'd to worldly praiſe;
Here felt, from noiſe ſequeſter'd, and from ſtrife,
The ſweet oblivion of a rural life.

To raiſe your flowers various arts combine,
Study theſe well, and Fancy's flights decline.
If you would have a vivid vigorous breed
Of every kind, examine well the ſeed.
Learn to what elements your plants belong,
What is their conſtitution, weak or ſtrong:
Be their phyſician, careful of their lives,
And ſee that every ſpecies duly thrives.
Theſe love much air; theſe on much earth rely:
Theſe, without conſtant warmth, decay and die.
Like tender females, quite domeſtic ſome,

It may be fatal if they ſtir from home.
By their own moiſture theſe can live alone:
Much water ſome, ſome little want, or none.

Obſerve how Nature paints, and then you'll ſay,
Art, when compar'd, looks faint, and dies away. *
See the majeſtic tulip's gay attire,
View every flower e'en to the humble briar:
Firſt each diſtinctly and in order trace,
Then mark the whole. What grandeur, beauty, grace!
But from this view more pleaſure you'll derive,
If in the ſetting you ſhould ſo contrive,
That flowers of lighter hues may forward ſtand,
For darker hues a place behind demand.

Thus on the pencil'd canvas colours glow,
Where lights and ſhades in cloſe ſucceſſion flow,
Into each other mutually decline,
And by a gentle ſoft gradation join.
But ſay, of beauty ſuch profuſion whence?
Does it ſtand forth, alone to feaſt the ſenſe?
Shall man be fond of Nature's bounteous ſtore,
Juſt but to taſte, and then be fond no more?
Preſumptuous wretch! O blind to real good!
O worſe than vileſt of the reptile brood!

The

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* . . . . . But who can paint
Like Nature? can imagination boaſt
Amid its gay creation hues like hers?

THOMSON.

The worm to all that's beautiful is blind,
It's ſenſes only to itſelf confin'd:
On earth with ſloweſt progreſs labouring, where,
Though cloſe to man, it knows not man is there.
But thou, when Error's miſts thy blindneſs prove,
Canſt call forth Science, and the veil remove.

Exert thy reaſon then, and trace the cauſe
Of beauty, and well weigh who gave it laws.
In the creation, the Creator view,
And learn to *Him* what gratitude is due.
Why does the rainbow ſparkle in our eyes?
For the ſame cauſe the tulip's purple dyes.
That to their Author, man his thoughts may raiſe,
Inſpir'd with rapture, wonder, love, and praiſe.

As in ſome vaſt elaborate work of art,
Where ſprings, wheels, movements, act'ate every part;
The wiſe contrivance juſtly we admire,
Viewing each part with eager fond deſire.
But if the artiſt's known, who form'd the whole,
And as it were to matter gave a ſoul;
The mind exulting feels a purer joy,
When genius, wiſdom, judgment, all our thoughts employ.

An Hymn to Solitude.

[By J. Thomſon.]

HAIL, mildly-pleaſing ſolitude,
Companion of the wiſe and good;
But, from whoſe holy, piercing eye,
The herds of fools and villains fly.

Oh! how I love with thee to walk,
And liſten to thy whiſper'd talk,
Which innocence and truth imparts,
And melts the moſt obdurate hearts.

A thouſand ſhapes you wear with eaſe,
And ſtill in every ſhape you pleaſe.
Now wrapt in ſome myſterious dream,
A lone philoſopher you ſeem;
Now quick from hill to vale you fly,
And now you ſweep the vaulted sky.
A ſhepherd next, you haunt the plain,
And warble forth your oaten ſtrain,
A lover now, with all the grace
Of that ſweet paſſion in your face:
Then, calm'd to friendſhip, you aſſume
The gentle-looking HARTFORD's bloom.

Thine is the balmy breath of morn,
Juſt as the dew-bent roſe is born.

And

And while meridian fervours beat,
Thine is the woodland dumb retreat;
But chief, when evening ſuns decay,
And the faint landſcape ſwims away,
Thine is the doubtful ſoft decline,
And that beſt hour of muſing thine.

Deſcending angels bleſs thy train,
The virtues of the ſage, and ſwain;
Plain innocence, in white array'd,
Before thee lifts her fearleſs head:
Religion's beams around thee ſhine,
And chear thy gloom with light divine:
About thee ſports ſweet Liberty:
And rapt *Urania* ſings to thee.

Oh, let me pierce thy ſecret cell!
And in thy deep receſſes dwell.
Perhaps from *Norwood*'s oak-clad hill,
When Meditation has her fill,
I juſt may caſt my careleſs eyes
Where *London*'s ſpiry turrets riſe:
Think of its crimes, its cares, its pain,
Then ſhield me in the woods again.

FINIS.